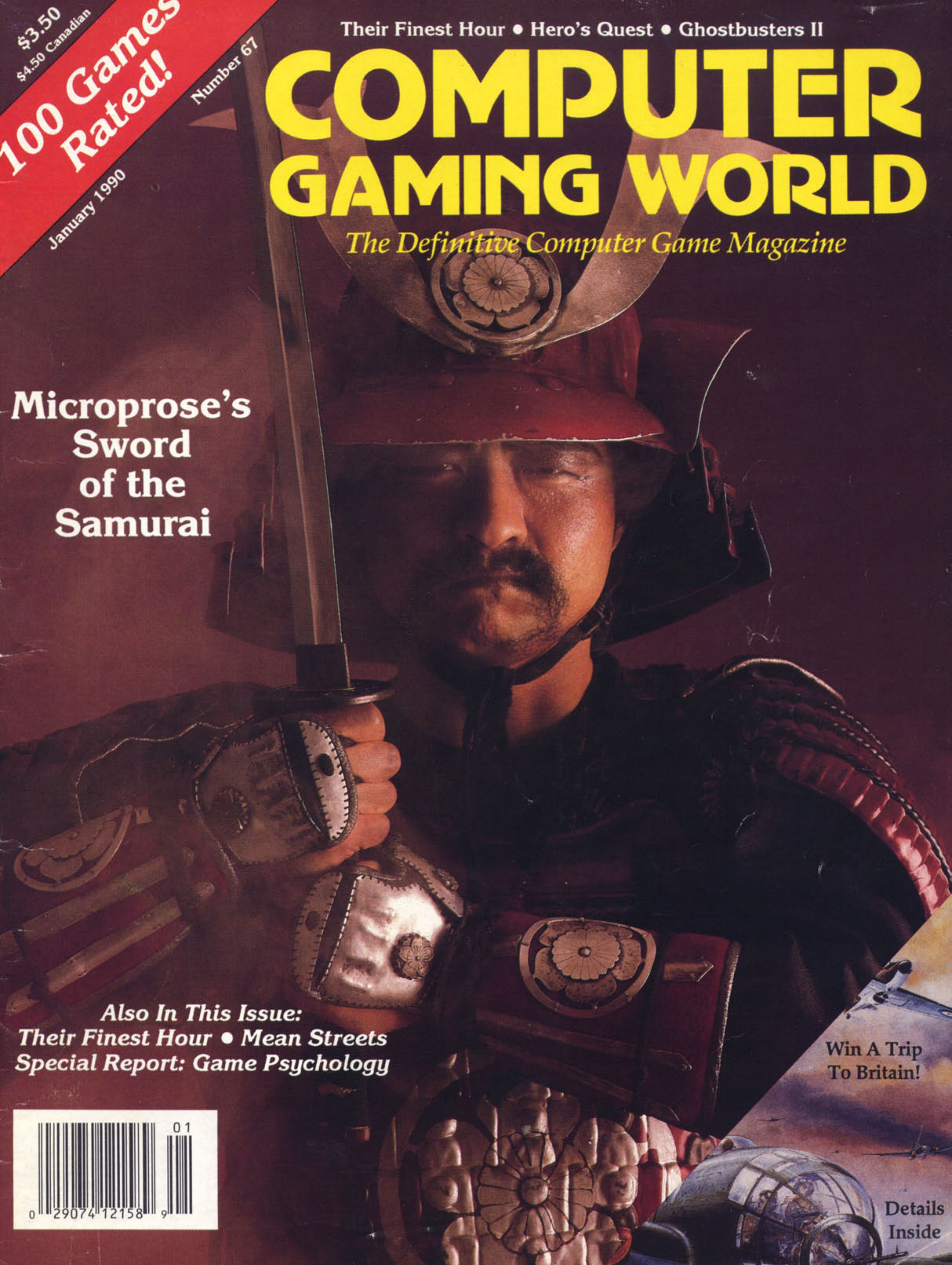
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Number 67
January 1990

100 Games Rated!

Their Finest Hour • Hero's Quest • Ghostbusters II

COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

The Definitive Computer Game Magazine



Microprose's Sword of the Samurai

Also In This Issue:
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Details Inside

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New Orleans. The Superdome. The biggest game of the year! All as close as your local software dealer! That's where you'll find ABC's Monday Night Football™—first in a hot new series of fast-action games from Data East MVP Sports.™

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Circle Reader Service #14

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY

If the prize symbol shown here exactly matches one of the prize symbols found on specially marked packages of Data East MVP Sports ABC's Monday Night Football Games, you win the prize indicated.

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Signature ____________________

prize symbol



See Official Rules for details.

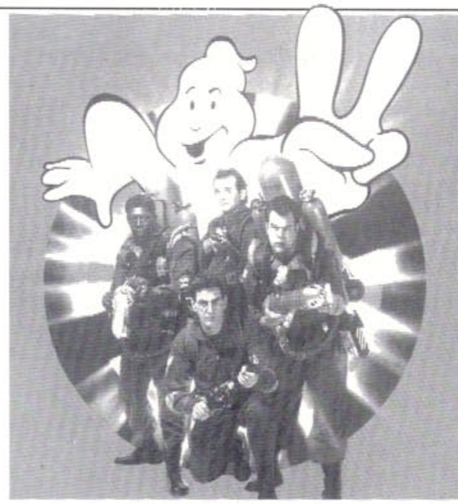
COMPUTER GAMING WORLD

Covering the World of Computer Games For Nine Years

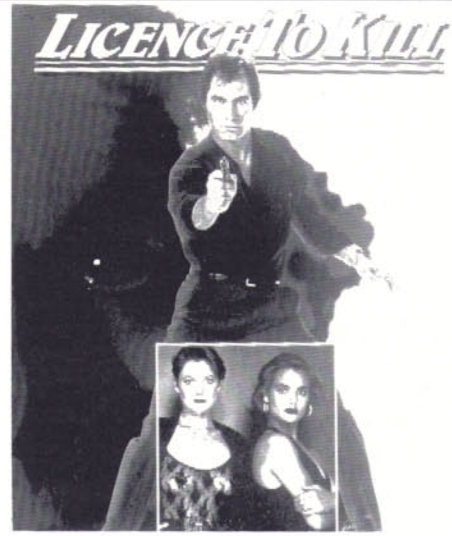
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COMPUTER GAMING WORLD (ISSN 0744-6667) is published monthly by Golden Empire Publications, Inc., 515 S. Harbor Blvd., Suite B, Anaheim, CA 92805. Second Class Postage Paid at Anaheim CA 92803 and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Computer Gaming World, P.O. Box 4566, Anaheim, CA 92803-4666.
The subscription rate for twelve issues (one year) is $24.00. Canadian and foreign surface subscriptions add $7.00. Foreign air subscriptions are $55.00 per year. All payments must be in U.S. dollars, made by check drawn upon a U.S. bank, Visa, Master Card, or money order.
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Circle Reader Service #15 »

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Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles is available for IBM, Commodore and Amiga.

The "Contest" Contest Results



In CGW #64 (October) we asked you to come up with ideas for contests for your fellow readers. Our favorite was one submitted by Patrick Buechner of Washington DC. He suggested that readers write "Taking A Peek" style reviews (i.e. one or two short paragraphs) for a list of fictional games. The list below includes the best of Patrick's titles along with a number that the staff of CGW dreamt up.

Contest #3 Rules

1. Pick five of the ten fictitious games listed below and write a "Taking A Peek" style review for each.

2. Keep each "review" to 100 words or less.

3. Entries will be judged on wit and originality.

4. Entries must be postmarked by February 15, 1990. Winning entries will be published in the April 1990 issue.

5. The winner will receive a three year subscription to CGW and will, of course, be made forever famous within these pages.

The Games

1. **Charge Card Crazies**
2. **Sin City**
3. **Microstuff Accountancy Simulator**
4. **Ancient Art of War At Three**
5. **Noriega's Ambition**
6. **M1 Tank Spittoon**
7. **688 Attack Tug**
8. **Star Trek: The Pepsi Generation**
9. **Pete Rose Fever**
10. **Bashful Bruce III: Looking For Love**...(complete the title and review the game).

Coin of the Realm

A Personal Note from the New Editor

There is no such thing as bad press. Like any axiom, there is an element of oversimplification about that statement. Yet, in many ways, that is a valid motto for the way I've approached my job at *Computer Gaming World* over the last few years. Those who prefer a more erudite rendition of the same essential sentiment may enjoy Supreme Court Justice William Brennan Jr.'s perspective, delivered in a 1979 speech at Rutgers University. Justice Brennan said, "As money is to the economy, so the press is to our political culture: It is the medium of circulation . . . the coin by which public discussion may be purchased."

As the new editor of *CGW*, I would amend his statement to assert that the press is not only the coin of the realm for public discussion to be purchased in the political culture, but also in the broadest understanding of culture in its entirety. Whether one is talking about art, entertainment, business, ethics, religion, philosophy, science or government, one cannot discuss that which he is not cognizant of and the media is the best way of disseminating the information necessary to make the citizenry aware of what is happening in *any* of these areas. Controversy, discussion, activism, change and affirmation are inevitable results of such information.

All I Need To Know, I Haven't Learned Yet

The State of the Magazine: If I facilitate these results, the readers and industry will inevitably have a "love/hate" relationship with the magazine. The industry will be angry when their products are not covered in the light they would prefer to highlight them with and the readers will be angry when they believe we haven't been critical enough. Nevertheless, both audiences will keep coming back for more because they are assured that we call them as we see them and they know we are trying to be accurate, fair and stimulating. Those are easy adjectives to write and say, difficult words to live by.

Unlike the best-selling pundit who feels, at least as a literary device, that he learned everything he needed to know in kindergarten, I am still learning. *CGW*'s founder and my personal mentor, Russell Sipe, has placed both a great honor and responsibility upon my shoulders. We share the same basic editorial vision, work extremely well as a team, and scrutinize every article submitted to *CGW* separately and together. This will not change. *CGW* will still take editorial risks in order to cover issues like game design, theory and psychology, as well as try to interpret one of the fastest changing industries in the history of civilization. We will still try to offer the most up-to-date, in-depth and, balanced coverage available (and occasionally, throw in some humor). Not everyone will like everything about every article, but *CGW* will continue to cover the entertainment software industry with its own special spin. Both Russ and I love that spin (We had better love it, it's part of what makes us who we are!) and we hope to make it better.

Future Shock

The State of the Industry: Finally, we would like to offer a glimmer of hope to those who thought about chucking their personal computers out of the window after reading about software companies joining the ranks of dedicated game machine supporters. Multimedia may be one of the last bastions of hope for those of us who prefer multi-purpose machines. Multimedia, according to Rob Glaser, the guru in charge of **Microsoft**'s special project division, will be built upon a 286 or 386 processor and will probably utilize both a CD-ROM drive and a Digital Video Interactive card operating in conjunction with a VGA graphics standard. The expanded storage capacity and provision for "broadcast quality video" in an interactive format should be too tempting for the software industry to resist.

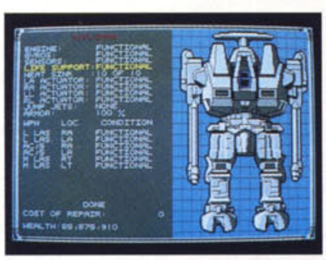
The downside is that **Intel Corporation** tells *CGW* that the DV-I card will not be priced below $1,000 until, at least, first quarter of 1992. Add to this the price of a CD-ROM drive and upgrades to VGA and that's quite a price for the average gamer. Still, we're betting that the temptation to imagine sports games with optically stored video images of real players, adventure games with real actors, and simulations utilizing authentic film footage is much too tantalizing to pass up.

The upside is that hardware prices inevitably drop *and* that *CGW* will keep you up to date and aware of what's happening in this area. Stay tuned! **CGW**

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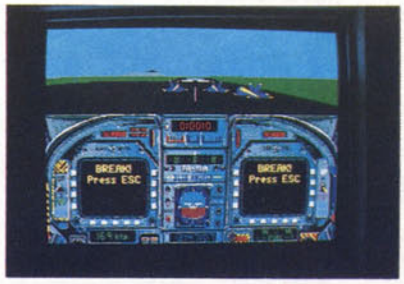
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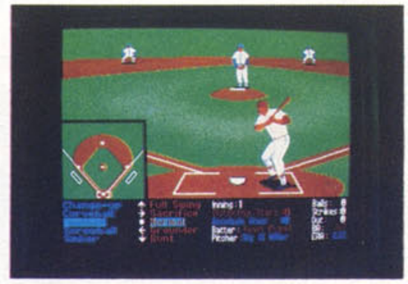
Accolade
550 S. Winchester Blvd.,
Ste. 200
San Jose, CA 95128

THE BLUE ANGELS: This formation flight simulator allows the player to maneuver any one of the four F/A-18 Hornet jets that make up the Navy's acrobatic stunt-flying team. Players start out in basic training, practice the maneuvers by themselves, practice with the other team members, and finally "strut their struts" at an actual airshow. IBM ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #1.

HARDBALL II: Fans of the original action game will be delighted with this much improved sequel. Along with the hard-ball action gaming of the original, this product offers a slew of features including: choice of playing perspectives, adjustable levels of play, an instant replay option, a team editor, and a league play option. A very robust baseball package. IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #2.



The Blue Angels



Hardball II



Deathtrack



The Manhole



Playmaker Football



Pocket Rockets

Activision
3885 Bohannon Drive
Menlo Park, CA 94025

DEATHTRACK: Players compete against ten 'Trackers' in a race to the finish line, to the death, or both. Racers begin a circuit with $10,000 which can be spent on parts or weapons for their car and earn additional cash by "placing" in a race (staying alive is tough enough) or fulfilling 'agreements' with a certain 'businessman' to take out other players. The money management aspect makes this as much a strategy game as an action game. The 3-D graphics system, developed by Dynamix, is outstanding and the action is extremely intense. This game might prove to be quite therapeutic for over-stressed commuters. IBM ($44.95). Circle Reader Service #3.

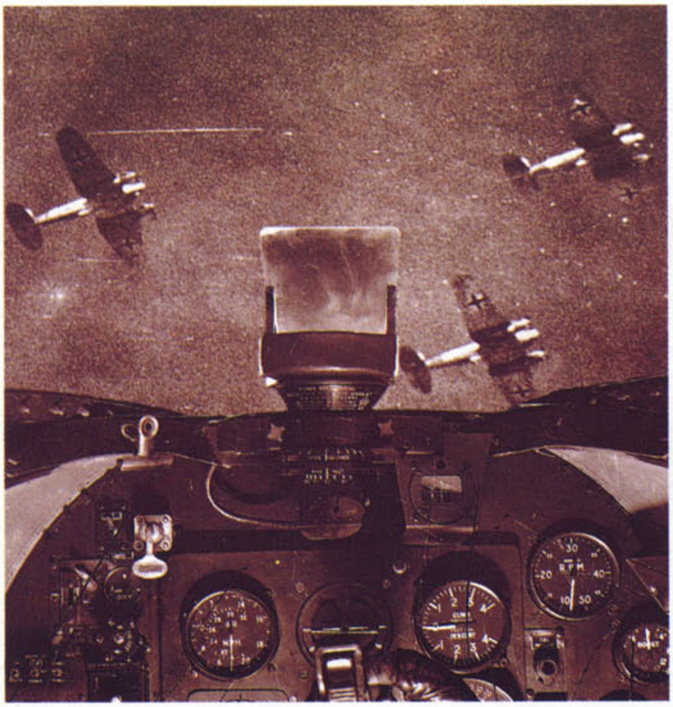
THE MANHOLE: Originally released as a CD-ROM game, this fantasy journey takes the player through a variety of macro-and micro-explorations. Designed for the younger set, the point and click interface allows the player to examine what goes on in a teacup, what lies at the top of a beanstalk, or how nicely appointed a dragon's house may be. Like *Cosmic Osmo*, this one is a real treat for the whole family. IBM ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #4.

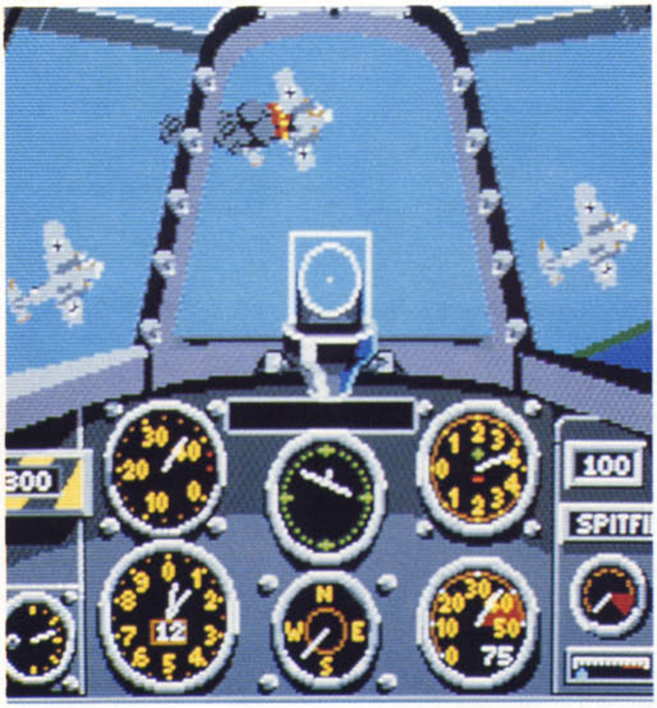
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PLAYMAKER FOOTBALL: This is a

(Continued on page 76)

Advertisers





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LUCASFILM™ GAMES



The Rumor Bag

by Howard "Bugsey" Kerkorian



"It wasn't my fault," I protested to my normally accommodating, but currently sullen, blonde public relations assistant, Ann. "They told me Dvorak's party was supposed to start at the Mirage and end up at Redd Foxx's mansion. I didn't know the Mirage wasn't open, yet." She floated back to the taxi and disappeared. *I* had to find another cab on the Las Vegas Strip and that's not easy during Comdex.

A car club drove by in caravan. Every car had a glitzy metallic paint job, air shocks adjusted to various incredible angles and a sound system blasting at the kind of decibel levels that cause city councils to pass nuisance laws. The whole scene made me wonder if **California Dreams** plans to put a "woofer and tweeter shoot-out" in their *Street Rod* data disk (due early this year). I doubt it, but I'm told it will feature some very different kinds of races (like jumping a broken bridge, for example).

One of the car club members passed by me slowly. "Hey," he called, "what club wears paper bags over their heads?!" I didn't have time to explain before he "revved" up his engine and popped the clutch, leaving behind enough rubber for me to scrape it up and make my own retread. The only time I drive like that is at the arcade when I play *Powerdrift*. I didn't even have a chance to tell him that **Activision** plans to release an IBM version of the popular coin-op hit in early 1990.

Just as I was ready to give up on hailing a cab, a producer I knew from Silicon Valley pulled up beside me. "Howard!" he called, "what happened to the party?" At least I wasn't the *only* person who didn't know. My friend knew a lot about the industry, though. He knew that the **Epyx** bankruptcy left a lot of products up in the air. *Ishido* was supposed to have been distributed by the publisher turned developer, but **Publishing International** plans to distribute the game itself. It's sort of a novel concept, though. They plan to sell 1,000 signed and numbered copies of the game. The game will come packaged in a prestige box, possibly a wooden one, and will include both the black and white version of the game plus the super deluxe Mac II color version. At a projected price point of $149.99 and available only from the company itself, it will be interesting to see how the game sells.

I wondered if **PI** would be more successful than Lord British. He sold numbered versions of the original *Akalabeth* at that one Computerland store and, last I heard, he still had numbers 12-25 in his possession. Of course, the "published" version came later and sold considerably more than 11.

He also knew that **California Access**, the hardware division of **Logical Design Works**, will be marketing the *500XJ Joystick* that **Epyx** used to distribute. Arcade gamers will be glad to know the joystick will still be available, he noted. Strategy and adventure gamers won't be pleased to know that there are rumors about a possible *Call of Cthulhu* licensed product, an adventure game that could have tremendously advanced the art of creating "artificial personality", and a global environmental simulation that are in jeopardy because of **Epyx**' woes.

I consoled him with the knowledge that **Data East** is preparing to launch in computer role-playing games. He admitted it was quite a departure for them and we both agreed to watch further developments with interest. Then, we passed by Las Vegas' version of Bill and Ted's "Waterloop". As the shadows of the waterslides flickered across our faces, I asked him if he'd heard about **Electronic Arts**' sequel to *Skate or Die!*. Looking back at the amusement park, he ventured "Swim or Die?"

I chuckled and explained that he was close, but in the wrong season of the year. "It's called *Ski or Die* and, naturally, Lester is back to make sure you do the latter." He kept trying to figure out what an acro aerial ski jump was, but he told me he was ready for the innertube thrash, snowboard halfpipe, and downhill blitz.

Our eyes were assaulted by an electronic billboard announcing the upcoming "roast" for Tommy Lasorda and he lamented the bug in *Earl Weaver Baseball 1.5* that allows "Computer Earl" to bring in infielders and outfielders as pitchers. I told him it was a problem with players who are only rated at one position. It seems that instead of assuming the player can only play one position, the program has arbitrarily assigned "Pitcher" as the secondary position. Most people are finding a quick fix by assigning "IF", "OF" or the player's original position as the second position.

We passed the Bally's Grand (formerly the M.G.M. Grand) where **Microprose** founders Bill Stealey and Sid Meier played a videogame entitled, *Red Baron*, and the idea for the company was born. Now, there are several World War I aviation games in the works with, at least, one of them (**Dynamix**'s *Red Baron*) slated to bear the nickname of the famous von Richtofen. There have been numerous rumors about such a product from **Microprose**. At first, several company employees refused to either confirm or deny such a product (although Arnold Hendrick went so far as to suggest that the rumor was very likely based on the videogame machine located in the programmer's lounge, the actual machine which inspired the company's formation). Later, *CGW* was told that the company held copyright on the title *Red Baron* and intends to publish the game in 1990. In addition, **Cinemaware** has plans to emulate the glorious days of WWI aces in *Wings* and another major designer is reputed to be considering a WWI air combat simulator using an existing game system.

We passed by an adult bookstore and my friend pointed out a sleazy-looking fellow wearing as much gold jewelry as Uncle Buddy in **Infocom**'s old *Hollywood Hijinx*. "Guy reminds me of 'Leisure Suit Larry'", he observed. This reminded me to tell him about **Sierra**'s rumored *Leisure Suit Larry* that's supposed to support modem play. Let's see, would that support X-Modem?

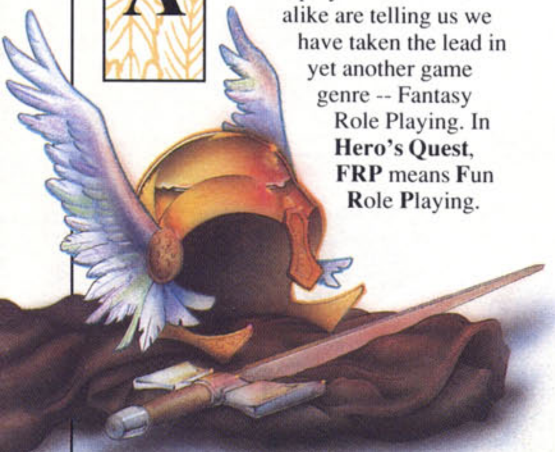
Walking to my room I sensed someone was following me. I turned to see who it was (peripheral vision doesn't exist when you're wearing a paper bag). Before I could make out who it was I felt a hard smash on the side of my bag. Everything went black (rather odd for Las Vegas) and that's the last thing I remember until . . . (To Be Continued Next Issue)

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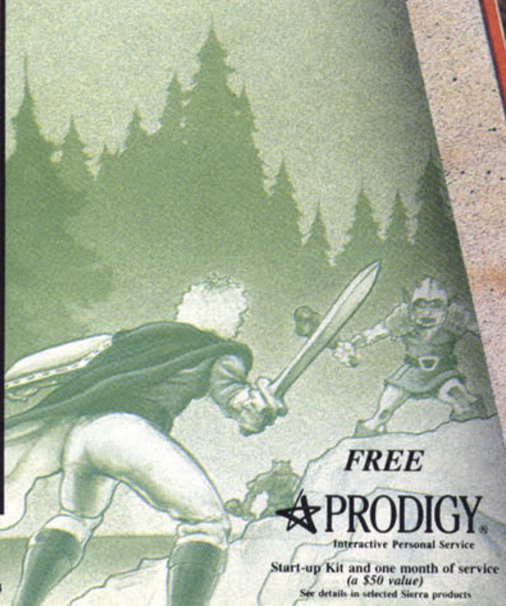
'The fairies were a riot! Great characterizations in this game, better even than Space Quest III, and that's going some.'

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'I like that ending a lot!!! I want to go back and replay...SOON!

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Top Ad Awards



Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I would like to welcome each of you to the Second Annual TOP AD Awards being held here this evening in the beautiful CGW Grand Crystal Ball Room. We hope the meal and wine were to your liking. We are gathered together this evening to be informed and entertained by the *best advertisements* in the computer entertainment industry. Last year's full page winner was New World Computing. New World topped the list of 41 advertisers with their "The Basics Elements of Adventure" full page ad. This year the list of competitors has grown to 48 companies.

The CGW TOP AD Awards are rapidly becoming THE showcase for the best in computer entertainment advertising.

Just like last year, you, our readers are asked to serve as the judges of our contest. We want *you* to select which ads deserve to win CGW's prestigious TOP AD Awards.

Awards will be given to three winners in two separate categories, for a total of six awards. Category One is for advertisements which are either *full* page or *two-page spread* sized. Category Two is for advertisements which are less than a full page in size.

The top vote getter in each category will be awarded CGW's TOP AD Platinum Award. The second place finisher will receive CGW's TOP AD Gold Award and the third place finisher will receive CGW'S TOP AD Silver Award.

As the judge of our contest you are eligible to win $250.00 and a lifetime subscription to CGW.



THE RULES

1. Use the Ballot Section of this month Reader Input Device card located opposite this page to cast your votes (or a facsimile thereof).

2. In the "Full Page & Spreads" Category vote for three different full page and/or two-page spread ads.

3. A two page spread ad would be an ad that appears on adjoining and facing left and right hand pages and is one continuous advertisement. A two-page spread ad counts as a single ad for voting purposes.

4. Select a first place, a second place, and a third place ad.

5. In the "Fractional Page" Category vote for three different ads. These are ads which are less than full page sized.

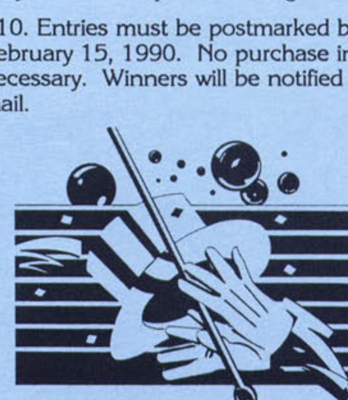
6. On the ballot, list the company names and page number of the ads you are voting for. For example: to place a first place vote for Acme Company's 1/2 page ad on page 345 write "Acme pg.345" on the line for 1st place in the fractional ad column.

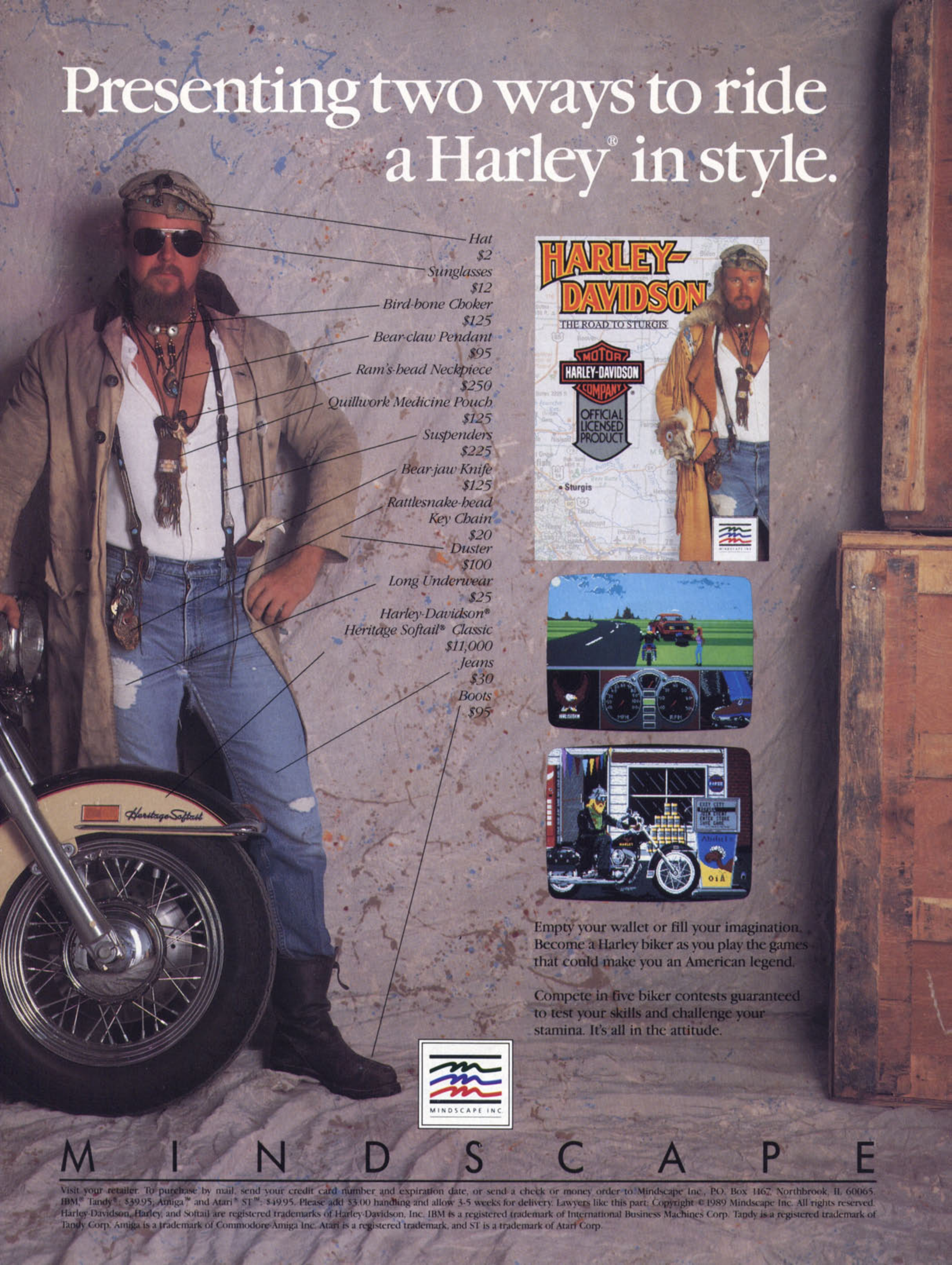
7. The criteria for evaluation is very simple: consider the graphics, copy, and overall impact of the ad.

8. The votes will be weighted, added and then averaged.

9. The reader that comes closest to picking the final correct order of winners will win $250.00 cash and a lifetime subscription to Computer Gaming World!

10. Entries must be postmarked by February 15, 1990. No purchase in necessary. Winners will be notified by mail.





Presenting two ways to ride a Harley® in style.
Hat $2
Sunglasses $12
Bird-bone Choker $125
Bear-claw Pendant $95
Ram's-head Neckpiece $250
Quillwork Medicine Pouch $125
Suspenders $225
Bear-jaw Knife $125
Rattlesnake-head Key Chain $20
Duster $100
Long Underwear $25
Harley-Davidson® Heritage Softail® Classic $11,000
Jeans $30
Boots $95
HARLEY-DAVIDSON
THE ROAD TO STURGIS
MOTOR HARLEY-DAVIDSON COMPANY
OFFICIAL LICENSED PRODUCT
Sturgis
Heritage Softail
Empty your wallet or fill your imagination. Become a Harley biker as you play the games that could make you an American legend.
Compete in five biker contests guaranteed to test your skills and challenge your stamina. It's all in the attitude.
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Visit your retailer. To purchase by mail, send your credit card number and expiration date, or send a check or money order to Mindscape Inc., P.O. Box 1167, Northbrook, IL 60065. IBM,® Tandy®: $39.95; Amiga™ and Atari® ST™: $49.95. Please add $3.00 handling and allow 3-5 weeks for delivery. Lawyers like this part: Copyright © 1989 Mindscape Inc. All rights reserved. Harley-Davidson, Harley, and Softail are registered trademarks of Harley-Davidson, Inc. IBM is a registered trademark of International Business Machines Corp. Tandy is a registered trademark of Tandy Corp. Amiga is a trademark of Commodore-Amiga Inc. Atari is a registered trademark, and ST is a trademark of Atari Corp.

Lost in the Ozone Again

"Air Warrior" on GEnie

by Dale Archibald



Closeup view of a P-51D Mustang from another Mustang



Close flyby of a bridge, from the cockpit of a P-38J Lightning.



View from the driver's seat of a jeep, one of the more spectacular pieces of user-drawn art.

I've been playing wargames since the early 1960s, computer games since I bartered for my first Apple in 1980. *Air Warrior* is the most exciting I've played yet.

Why? Because it's real-time and interactive. It's on **GEnie** (General Electric Network for Information Exchange), and was written for that organization by the **Kesmai Corp.**, out of Charlottesville, Virginia. It first came on-line in 1984 for the Macintosh.

Today, the field of battle is open to any modem-connected Atari ST, Amiga, IBM (with 640K and CGA or better graphics) or Macintosh owner.

This is a graphic game, not the typical interactive network game where players type in text commands a la "Adventure." Your computer runs the software and the positions of the other players are reflected on the screen. The closer you get, the more detailed the graphic representations of your co-players.

The *Air Warrior* program itself is free. You pay only for the time you spend downloading and then, playing, the game. Data arrives—for the PC, at least, as ARCed files (i.e. compressed for transmission through X-Modem protocol). You UnARC it on receipt. You'll receive the *Air Warrior* program, manuals, terrain and aircraft files in this manner.

Gentlemen, Start Your Engines

Fortunately, it is possible to practice *Air Warrior* off-line. In this way, you can learn takeoffs, landings and how various aircraft handle. WWI and II fighters and bombers are available. These include: the P51 Mustang; Japanese Zero; Messerschmidt ME-262; Spitfire; Messerschmidt ME109; Fockwulf FW190; P38J Lightning; F4U Corsair; B17 Flying Fortress, B25, and A26 bombers. WWI aficionados can pick from the Camel, Spad, and Fokker.

However, you can't practice combat off-line. You don't even have bombs or bullets. For that, you need to log onto GEnie and move to the Air Warrior training section. For combat training, the best time is Thursday night. That's when experienced pilots attend to help novices. You can practice shooting each other without affecting your combat rating. Soon enough, however, you'll decide you want to get into "real" combat. So, you'll move to the main arena.

You begin by reserving a combat theater, selecting a field and selecting an aircraft.

Typing "/fly" switches you from headquarters into the cockpit. Then, the field, as well as control panel appears. At the left margin are three letters: A on a blue background, B on green and C on white (On Macs these colors appear as shades of gray.). Under those is the letter that signifies which country you belong to. The controls are flexible enough to use either a joystick and mouse combination or mouse only.

Target In Sight

So, just take off and look for bogies. You have two views from the cockpit: radar and "through the viewscreen". Radar, if it hasn't been bombed out, lets you see friends and opponents at a distance and allows you to identify them by type and color. So, an A aircraft will be a blue line, a B will be green, and a C displayed as white. Under the radar screen, will be the aircraft type and its distance from you. The viewscreen shows them in varying ways, depending upon their distance. Beyond 5,000 yards, they show up as dots. Within 5,000 yards, an identifying icon appears directly under the dot, at the top of your control panel. An A aircraft would appear as a numeral on a blue field, a B as a numeral on a green background, and a C as a numeral in a white box. Don't ever shoot your fellow countrymen!

As you get closer, the aircraft appear more clearly. First, as text characters, then finally assuming a full polygonal rendering.

Fighters sport a set of crosshairs on the nose. Within 1,000 yards, it is a simple

(Continued on page 78)

Sam's trying to keep his head. Literally. But in Sword of the Samurai, he's up to his neck in trouble.

As an ambitious young Samurai, you struggle to move up the military and social ladder in 16th Century Japan. Defending your honor is crucial



to achieving your ultimate goal: to become Shogun, ruler of the realm! But every step of the way, you'll be opposed by ambitious enemy Samurai, each of whom employs a different scheme to deceive and destroy you.

To survive, you'll need your wits as well as your weapons. You must outsmart clever political rivals who smile to your face, then work behind your back to blacken your reputation, kidnap your family or raise armies against you.

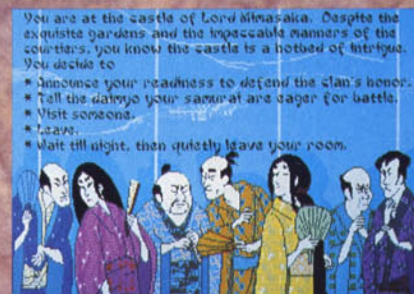
After class, Sam Bushnell will duel with a Ninja, defend his honor, become Shogun and rule feudal Japan.

Just for fun.



The action is fast and furious as you take on multiple warriors in darkened castles and remote villages. You'll also defend your honor one-on-one, using authentic Samurai swordplay against skilled opponents.

Sword of the Samurai has starting options for new players and four skill levels. A unique



system of menus and text windows will guide you in travel and bring each adventure to life. There's even a detailed political map to show you different provinces, each ruled by its own warlord.

All with authentic Japanese graphics and music, the smoothest animation, as well as the quick thinking and heart-racing action you've come to expect from MicroProse.

Remember, in Sword of the Samurai, there's more than your life at stake. There's your honor. So draw your sword and sharpen your wits!

Just for fun.



Can't find SWORD OF THE SAMURAI? Call (301) 771-1151 x208, weekdays 8:30 am to 5:30 pm Eastern Time and order by MC/Visa/AmEx; or mail check/money order for $54.95 (specify disk size). Free shipping in U.S. $5.00 international. U.S. funds only. MD residents add 5% sales tax. MicroProse Software, Inc.; 180 Lakefront drive, Hunt Valley, MD 21030. *For IBM-PC/XT/AT/PS2/Tandy/Compatibles. Requires 384k RAM. Supports MCGA/VGA, EGA, CGA and Hercules graphics.*

MICROPROSE™
Just For Fun.

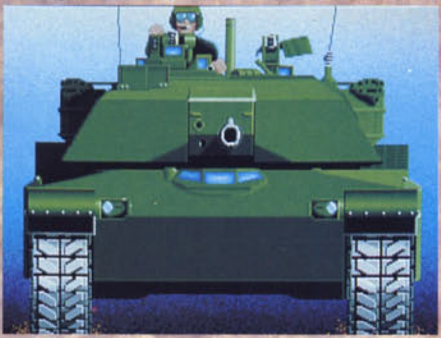
Last night John Roland led sixteen men into battle, survived an artillery barrage, toasted eight Soviet tanks and saved Europe.

Just for fun.

The minute John sat down to play M1 TANK PLATOON, he was a changed man.

He knew he'd never play another tank game again.

Only M1 TANK PLATOON puts you in control of four tanks, instead of just one. And only M1 TANK PLATOON has



rolling terrain that you can climb and hide behind, like a real tank commander would!

You'll command sixteen men, and promote them as their skills improve. Plus, you can take over as commander, gunner or driver in any tank!

You can practice at a firing range on stationary or moving targets. Then take on a few unskilled foes, and as you improve, make them smarter and meaner!

In M1 TANK PLATOON, you can choose your own battles. Fight day or night, in good weather or bad. Call in air or artillery support when you need it. Break through enemy lines, or fight to hold your hill. Troops and battlefields always change, so you'll never fight the same battle twice!

Your tanks carry high-tech weapons and authentic instrumentation. Zoom in on the 16,000 acre battle map to get the details, or zoom out to see everything at once!

Only M1 TANK PLATOON has a manual that tells you everything you need to know about real tank combat and tactics.





All with the dazzling Super 3-D Graphics, quick thinking and non-stop action that made us the first, last and best name in combat simulations.

Get into M1 TANK PLATOON and get fired up for real tank combat!

Just for fun.



Watch for "The Major's Mission" Contest coming to your favorite retailer November 1!

Can't find M1 TANK PLATOON? Call (301) 771-1151 x208, weekdays 8:30 am to 5:30 pm Eastern Time and order by MC/Visa/AmEx; or mail check/money order for $69.95 (specify disk size). U.S. funds only. MD residents add 5% sales tax. MicroProse Software, Inc.; 180 Lakefront Drive; Hunt Valley, MD 21030. *For IBM-PC/XT/AT/PS2/Tandy/Compatibles. Requires 384k RAM. Supports MCGA/VGA, EGA, CGA and Hercules graphics.*

MICROPROSE™
Just For Fun.

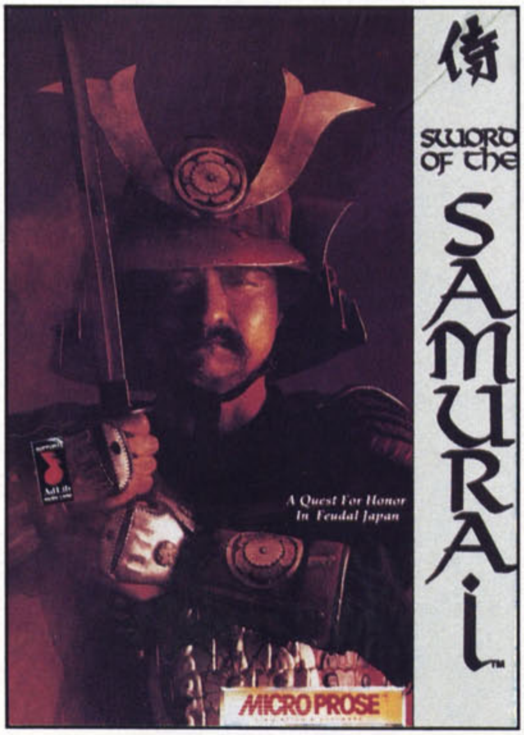
Circle Reader Service #21

Unsurpassable Honor

"Sword of the Samurai"™ from Microprose

by Johnny L. Wilson

Sword of the Samurai (SOS) communicates the spirit of feudal Japan on many different levels. It is a tapestry woven of numerous threads of deliberation, decisive action, determination and destiny. It offers a carefully textured mix of action, role-playing and strategy, delicately balanced with enough artistic and historical detail to tremendously enhance the total gaming experience. Evan Brooks has suggested that *SOS* is like *Nobunaga's Ambition* meets *Castle Wolfenstein*, but the game reflects more than a conflation of elements from earlier games. It offers even more than its spiritual ancestor, *Pirates!*



TITLE:	Sword of the Samurai
SYSTEM:	IBM
PRICE:	$54.95
DESIGNER:	Lawrence Schick
PUBLISHER:	Microprose Hunt Valley, MD

Zen and the Art of Hatamoto Prominence

Sword of the Samurai has its own zen. There are enough different game play options and diverging streams of destiny to keep players coming back to the game time after time. This reviewer found himself regularly saving positions, just so that he could find out what would happen if he did *not* marry that woman of acceptable honor; if he *did* commit the treacherous act of assaulting his own hatamoto or daimyo; if he incited a rival's peasants to revolt (or assassinated him) or if he retired from worldly affairs or not. Part of the game's beauty is that one continually finds himself puzzling over whether to choose actions which may enhance: generalship over honor, swordsmanship over generalship or land (wealth) over any of the preceding considerations, etc.

In addition, one has to be impressed by the artistic detail in the game. Japanese tapestry art styles are used on some screens. Oriental music creates just the right emotion whether one is using the generic IBM sounds, AdLib or Roland (The soundboards add significant richness, but the soundtrack is still an impressive touch without the enhancements.). Subtle atmospheric touches like the philosophical cliches ("Suspend Expectations Of Imminence", "The Tide Hastens For No Man", and "Deliberation Is Preferable To Haste") appear between sequences and enhance the flow of the game.



Provincial Map: Arigato returns to His Home Estate.

Play begins with the player selecting a geographical province. There, his samurai persona controls the smallest fief among the clan holdings. Next, he is introduced to his rivals as the screen displays portraits and descriptions of each character in an authentic-looking Japanese art style. The tapestried background behind the portraits and brush strokes on the "paintings" themselves is very effective.

On the status screen, he is listed as a "disappointment" to the *hatamoto*, the trusted lieutenant who serves the *daimyo* or clan leader. His task is to build wealth, strength, honor and ability in such a way that he can either succeed the *hatamoto* upon his death (the most honorable method) or usurp him (the quickest, but least honorable, method).

At the beginning of each turn, a menu describing the player character's options is provided. In addition to those printed on the screen, players can access the status screen and/or summary screen to determine current rankings and opportunities. Also, characters currently located in their home fief can save or restore games.

Campaign options usually appear as text descriptions printed over classical Japanese landscapes. Players are required to march their armies to the *hatamoto*'s (or later, the *daimyo*'s) castle and "volunteer" to do battle before the rivals can get their forces there. This is accomplished by walking an armored samurai icon from one point on the map to another. Often, the journey will be interrupted with opportunities to win honor through "Melee" sequences or "Duels". If one wishes to insure that he gets to the lord's castle before his rivals, however, he will avoid these opportunities and concentrate on the task at hand. The resultant loss in honor will be more than compensated by the lord's gift of land in victory and the character's improvement in generalship.



"Battle" Sequence: Arigato Opts for the "Arrowhead" Formation.

This reviewer found the surest path to *hatamoto* by building his army, drilling his troops, and taking every opportunity to serve the hatamoto (or even the other samurai) in battle. If one is successful in battle, one is given portions of land to add to one's fief. Larger fiefs represent the ability to maintain more

(Continued on page 81)

MOST GAMES WEAR OUT AFTER A FEW WEEKS. OURS LASTS 1,500 YEARS.

Finally there's a game that's still an adventure years after you buy it: *Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?*®

Unlike your typical fly-it, drive-it, stomp-it game, this brand new release in Brøderbund's award-winning series relies on your most important reflex: Your nimble mind.

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VGA graphics give you the most arresting scenes ever put on a computer screen.

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Running on IBM® PC/Tandy,® or Apple,® *Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?* also comes with the *New American Desk Encyclopedia* and a poster of the whole gang to keep you hot on the trail.

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Scorpion's Tale

As Told By Scorpia

HERO'S QUEST™ I



TITLE:	Hero's Quest I: So You Want To Be A Hero
SYSTEM:	IBM
PRICE:	$59.95
DESIGNERS:	Lori and Corey Cole
PUBLISHER:	Sierra On-Line Coarsegold, CA

Here we are, starting off a new year and a new decade of gaming! Even Fred is feeling a little excited about that. So, draw your chair closer to the fire, settle in with your favorite beverage, and we'll begin 1990 with a smile (hopefully a good omen for the rest of the year!). You've always wanted to be a hero, right?

Hero's Quest I, from **Sierra**, is a cute little gem that combines role-playing and adventuring with a healthy dose of humor to produce a game that is extremely fun to play. While the puzzles are, for the most part, on the easy side, the overall effect (even for the experienced gamer) is satisfying by any measure.

It is also one of the few games that are truly replayable. This is mainly due to the fact that there are three character classes (Fighter, Thief, Mage) and each can solve various puzzles differently, as well as have experiences not available to other classes.

For instance, a thief in this game is really a thief. He's the one who can break into people's houses, clean out all their goodies, and then fence the lot at the Guild for ready cash (hmmm, that sure got your attention, didn't it? Hehe). Just watch out for the sheriff.

You start by creating your character, who comes with a set of basic attributes and skills, depending on class. Then you beef him (or her) up a bit with 50 more points you can put wherever you like. It's possible to make a character who is, say, a fighter/mage or a mage/thief or fighter/thief, but it's really more fun to play the straight character class. Then, you can go back later and try the game as something else.

So, now that you're a graduate of the Famous Adventurers Correspondence School (and you have a diploma to prove it!), it's time to find a place to do all those heroics you've dreamed of doing. The little town of Spielburg is a good place to start.

Spielburg has its share of problems. A recent avalanche has cut off the mountain pass, isolating the town until the snow melts (good thing you made it in before that happened!). So, lots of nasty critters, being likewise trapped, are now roaming the great outdoors. Ah well, no one said a hero's life was a safe one!

In addition, as you discover during your wanderings around Spielburg, various citizens also have problems of their own. The healer has lost a valuable ring and the local Baron has lost both his son and daughter. A band of brigands is terrorizing the vicinity, making life difficult for the merchants in the town. There's even an evil witch, in the person of Baba Yaga, lurking in the background. All in all, you have plenty of work to keep you busy (and heroic) for some time!

The first order of business is to make a complete circuit of the town, talking with everyone available. Since the interface is the standard one used in Sierra's regular adventures, you do this by typing in such commands as "Ask about brigands" or "ask about baron", etc.

A stop at the Guildhall, where you can read the notices on the bulletin board (some rather old...obviously, no other heroes have ventured here for quite some time) about who needs help with what. As a beginner, you probably don't want to take on, just yet, anything like rescuing kidnapped daughters or cleaning out a nest of highway robbers.

Something a little simpler is called for here. So, perhaps a visit to the healer, just outside town, might be a good idea. She's a kindly old soul and will pay money for certain items she needs to make her potions. She also has potions for sale, but they're a trifle expensive. So, don't go buying any right away.

Some of those items, such as cheetaur claws and troll's beard, are best left for the very experienced to acquire. Mushrooms and flowers are more your speed at the moment. Still, this does give you a good excuse to explore the woods (do map, or you may get lost) and environs around Spielburg.

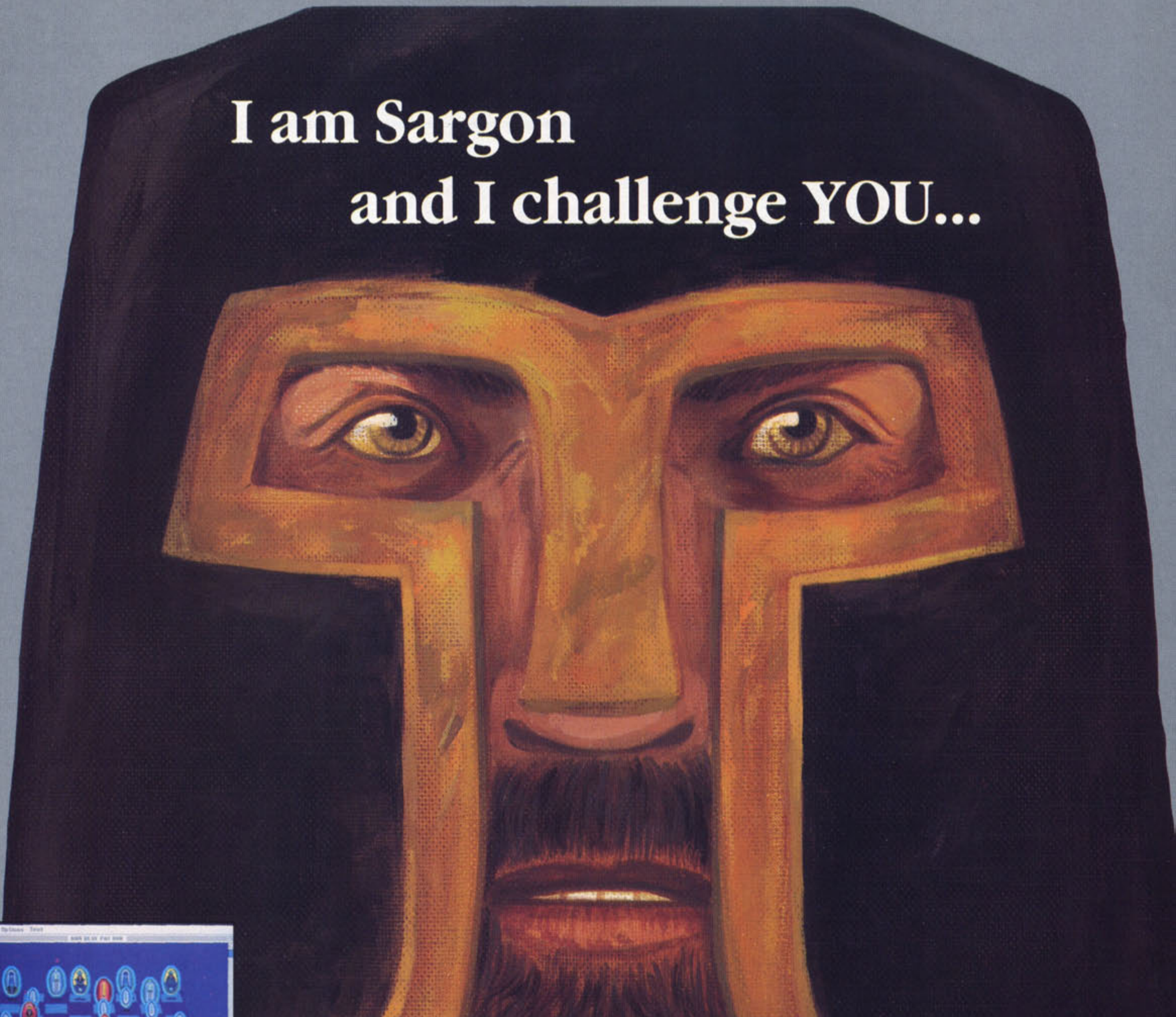
As you wander about, you will, inevitably, come across something hostile. Fortunately, unless it's *very* close, you can run (and I do mean run!) away to be heroic another day. Even if you're a fighter, you can't take on just anything at the start. You have to build yourself up with easy (or as easy as they come) encounters. A goblin now or then is best.

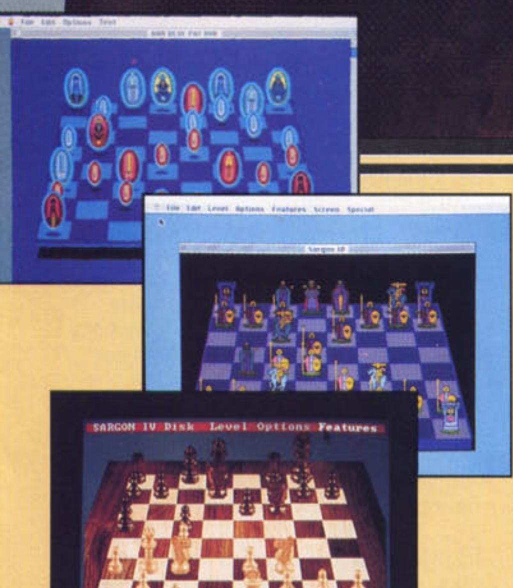
This is especially true as the combat system is like nothing you have seen before and takes some getting used to. The combat screen shows a very detailed close-up of your opponent from about waist to head, straight on in front of you. You also see yourself (as from the rear), sword and shield in hand (if you have 'em), from about the shoulders up.

The cursor keys are used to determine your actions, which include dodging, parrying, and, of course, striking the enemy. In some respects, this is arcade-like, but not really, since the action is slow, rather than lightning-speed. Timing is more important than quick reflexes. One of the neat features here is the expressions of

(Continued on page 56)

I am Sargon and I challenge YOU...





Actual IBM and Macintosh screens

...to world class chess like you've never seen before! With the strongest chess program (as proven in matched head-to-head competition) and the best 3D graphics, SARGON 4 is computer chess at its finest. The novice levels, with hints and special teaching features, are ideal for the beginner, while the higher levels can challenge - and beat - a master. All the standard features are there for either 2D or 3D play, plus extras like the Piece Sculptor for customized sets (Mac), Notepad for game annotations, and Mood files (IBM) that personalize the graphics and menus. Find out why over a quarter of a million chess fans have already made the Sargon choice.



IT'S YOUR MOVE NOW...

Price: $49.95 (plus $3.50 shipping & handling)
Available at fine software dealers everywhere
or to order call: **1-800-826-0706**

SPINNAKER

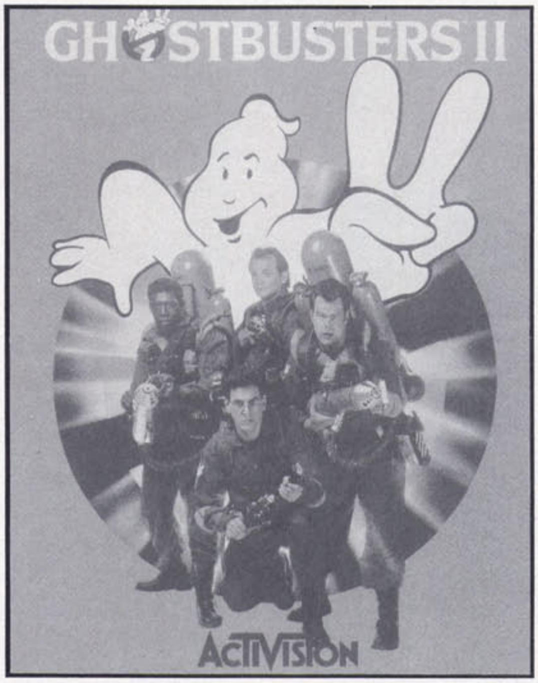
I STILL AIN'T 'FRAID OF NO GHOST!

By David Wilson

Just when you thought it was safe to go back to your computer . . . You've been slimed! In fact, when you play **Activision**'s *Ghostbusters II*, you'll be slimed repeatedly and, if you're not careful, you'll probably also find yourself strait-jacketed and housed in a rubber room in Parkview Mental Hospital.

This new game follows closely the storyline of the movie. A super-evil apparition, Vigo, scourge of Carpathia, is gathering his forces of evil in New York. The Big Apple is especially susceptible to this evil attack because evil forces live off of negative emotions. And where else, in all the world, are there more negative emotions than New York City? After all, even their picante sauce is bad?

TITLE:	Ghostbusters II
SYSTEMS:	IBM with 512K (C-64 soon)
PRICE:	$44.95
DESIGNER:	Doug Barnett
PUBLISHER:	Activision Menlo Park, CA



Gameplay begins in the courtroom, where the boys are about to answer for their crimes. The judge fines the gang $10,000. His negative energy explodes a beaker filled with negatively charged slime. This, in turn, releases the ghosts of the infamous Scoleri brothers whose unified goal is to get even with the judge who sentenced them to be executed in the electric chair.

The courtroom is as good a room as any to learn how to focus the eye of the Proton beam weapon and avoid ghostly fireballs. Also, a slimer-type ghost will frequently appear to toss a ball of slime at the player character. The secret to whipping the Scoleris is to concentrate on the fat brother first. He is a larger target and easier to hit. Once the fat brother is captured, the skinny phantom is easily captured. Players will need to hurry because it only takes a moment or two for a captured ghost to escape from the trap.

Losing the "Courtroom Scene" action sequence is no big deal. The gang just starts off $10,000 in debt. If the player happens to win the segment, however, the judge will suspend the sentence. It's a wide-open sequence where players are free to trash the courtroom and even encouraged to blast the rude District Attorney. Enjoy the disorder in the court because you won't have to pay for damages as you do in other ghostbusting scenes.

The central game control point is the lab. An arrow is moved around the lab to select game options. Players can choose to go out and collect slime samples; go ghostbusting to earn cash; test slime samples with a CD player; rescue a companion from the Parkview mental ward or, finally (after earning $55,000), take the Statue of Liberty for a walk. If you choose an option that doesn't make sense (like testing slime when you have none) a portrait of Bill Murray appears trailing a comical thought balloon.

To collect slime, the player goes to the abandoned train tunnel and climbs down a rope with scoop in hand. Slime collection will be hampered by a green arm reaching upward from the river of slime and attempting to pull the player's character off the rope. Slimers will regularly appear and, if they slime the on-screen character four times, he is slated for a gooey, slimy swim. It's best to collect the slime sample as quickly as possible and then climb out. Fortunately, should the player be grabbed by the green monster lurking in the depths, he usually will be able to shake himself loose. Each successive trip, however, will find the slimers more active and more aggressive.

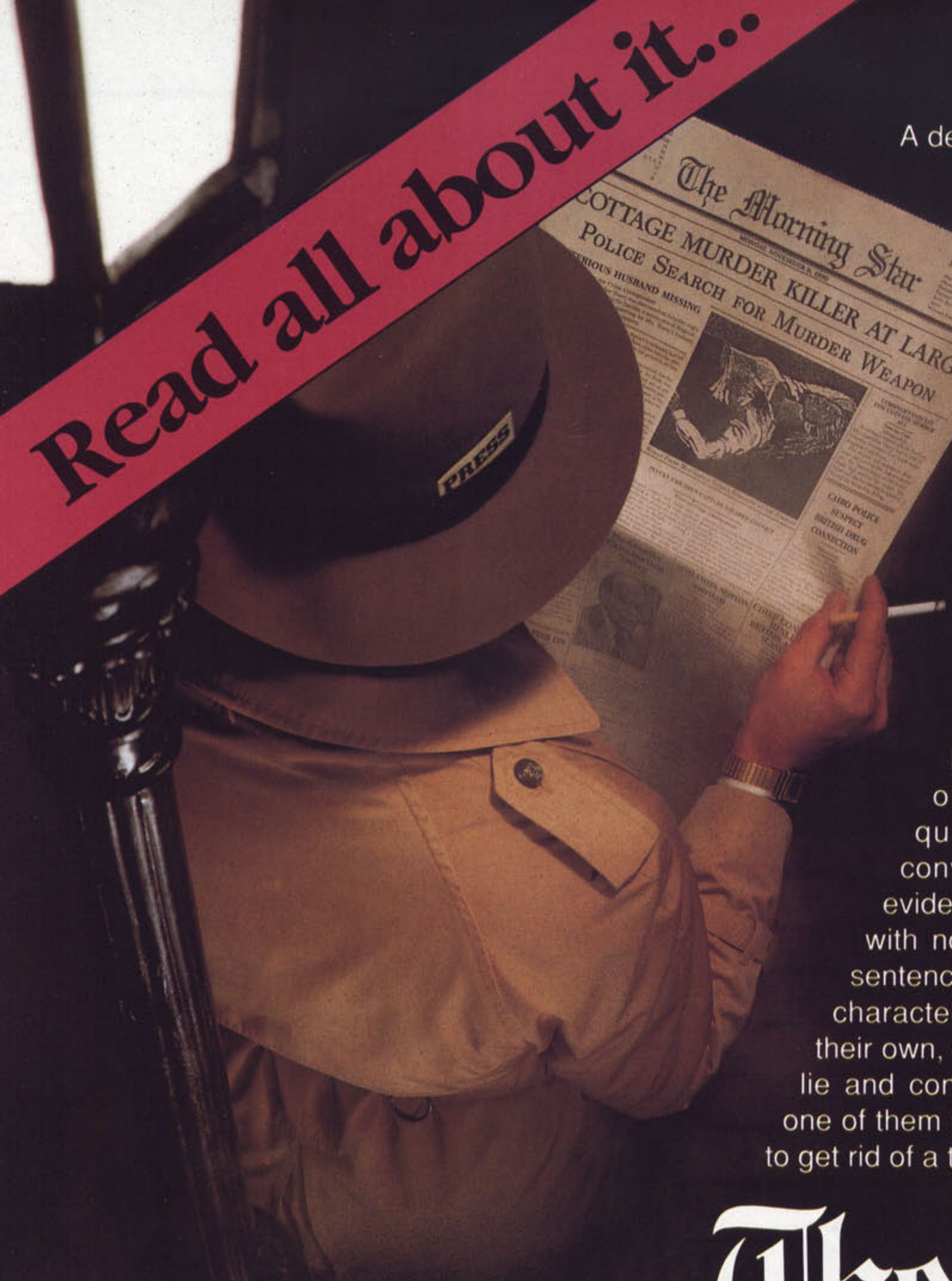
Testing slime is done by selecting the CD player in the lab and choosing a musical track to play. As a result, the slime will either explode in the beaker or settle down. The player will need to find three calming songs out of the nine possible musical tracks. This has the function of forcing players to make repeated forays into the underground train station.

Selecting the laboratory's phone leads to a ghostbusting job. There are three parts of town being plagued by pestilent poltergeist: Central Park, Northrones Department Store and the Docks. All scenes work the same way. One simply blasts the ghosts until they are sucked into the ghostbuster trap. If the player can avoid the slime thrown by the blue slimers (six slimeballs and you're out) and the fireballs thrown by the ghosts (three fireballs and you're toast) while accomplishing this, success can be sweet. Losing either the slime collection scene or a ghostbusting job, however, will ensure one of the team a free one-way ticket to Parkview.

In the latter case, players are given the option of rescuing their teammate. While scaling the walls of the loony bin, it is important to note which windows have shadows. These shadows can be either the hospital orderlies (who will *not* be glad to see you) or your partner-in-slime.

(Continued on page 37)

Read all about it...



A dead woman...
A deserted house...
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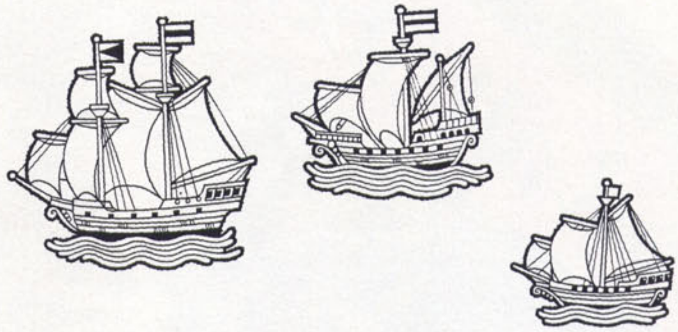
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Over There!



by Paul Rigby



Final Battle (Amiga)



Cadaver (ST)



Blade Warrior (PC)

Here is the latest information on European computer games. Mention of availability refers to the UK market, however, they can be obtained via the addresses listed at the end of this column.

Betrayal (**Rainbird**) is an Amiga, C-64, IBM and Atari ST game which combines economic, military and political variables. The aim of the game is to fill the two rival courts with courtiers under your personal control in order to wrest control from a weak king or bishop and install your own puppet king or bishop. To reach this position, you must acquire armies, towns, and militia; manage your resources wisely; and untangle yourself from a web of political subterfuge. **Microprose U.K.** should introduce *Betrayal* in Europe before Christmas.

Mike Singleton, a respected programmer with a wealth of experience behind him, has created *Midwinter* (another product under the **Rainbird** label). With assistance from his *Maelstrom* team, he now offers a strategy game set in the 21st Century. A global climatic crisis has caused chaos by turning temperate zones into arctic conditions—an endless winter. However, the old political structures have collapsed, leaving local communities to fend for themselves. General Masterman is an up and coming dictatorial character, having taken control of several regions in the south-east of the country. Players take on the role of Captain Stark, an officer in the Free Villages Peace Force, who must lead the fight against the mobilized forces of Masterman. The primary goal is to capture his HQ before he can take away all the Free Villages' "Heat Mines". *Midwinter* features solid 3-D, textured and light-sourced graphics throughout, as well as several real-time action sequences. It is scheduled for pre-Christmas release on Amiga, Atari ST and IBM formats.

Interphase is a new **Imageworks** game on Amiga, Atari ST, and IBM formats. Set in the future, it posits a world where people live computer-controlled dreams in order to fill their leisure time. As a developer of the same, a professional dreamer (if you will), the player discovers that his employer, The Corporation, is using the dreams to subliminally influence its users in a concerted effort to enslave the minds of the general public. The goal of the game becomes entering a dream, reaching the heart of The Corporation's giant computer mainframe, manipulating the security tracks and retrieving the sinister dreamtrack which is accomplishing most of the damage. The game features smooth filled 3-D graphics, action sequences and logic puzzles.

The Legend of the Sword was well received in the U.K. It mixed the standard text/graphic adventure with a variety of interesting features applied to the computer interface, as well as intriguing character manipulation. The sequel, entitled *The Final Battle* (also from **Imageworks**), is expected to appear before Christmas for Amiga, Atari ST and IBM. At the beginning of the sequel, the player discovers that, as is a habit in this type of game, the "Sword" has been re-stolen by the foe, a fellow called Suzar. The player's character must not only retake the "Sword", but rescue his kidnapped friends and collect six crystals in order to completely vanquish Suzar. *The Final Battle* features a weather system which affects character actions, a comprehensive range of character statistics, improved parser and 3-D graphics for locations.

Another **Imageworks** release is intriguing because it is the first role-playing game from a team known as the Bitmap Brothers. The brothers are famous, within the U.K., for producing two games (*Xenon* and *Xenon II*). They were "shoot-'em-ups" which featured arcade quality graphics with excellent sound and gameplay. A computer role-playing game release, therefore, is rather surprising. In *Cadaver* (Amiga, Atari ST and IBM), the player becomes a medieval sleuth whose task is to track down and kill a mass murderer. As an earlier search party was never heard of again, the player's character faces a challenging task. The game should offer a detailed plot, high quality

(Continued on page 70)

Q. *What do you get when you mix sharp graphics and sensational sound with unbeatable game play?*





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STARGOOSE. The equipment: The new top secret fighter, codename STARGOOSE, packed to the hilt with every weapon imaginable. The assignment: Steal the power crystals from the eight cities on the planet NOM. But watch out! The rolling landscape is covered with machine gun nests, laser pill boxes, automatic rocket launchers, and pre-programmed robot attack vehicles. Fuel and ammo will go like crazy, so be ready to steal more from the storage tunnels under the cities. Absorb yourself in spectacular 3D graphics, as you climb, dive, dodge and twist your way along the alien landscape. The aliens await your attack. Come back with the jewels or don't come back at all!



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"This England never did, nor ever shall, lie at the proud foot of a conqueror"
— King John V by William Shakespeare.

Spartans in Spitfires

Britain's "Thermopylae in the Sky"

by Russell Sipe



TITLE:	Their Finest Hour The Battle of Britain
SYSTEM:	IBM 512K Coming Soon: Amiga, Atari ST
PRICE:	$59.95
DESIGNER:	Lawrence Holland
PUBLISHER:	Lucasfilm Games San Rafael, CA

Shakespeare had no way of knowing that two centuries after he wrote those words, almighty unconquerable England would come within a few warriors of being laid low by a foreign conqueror. But for a few brave men, Hitler may have been that conqueror and *his* statement that the Third Reich would "Rule for a thousand years" might have become the most memorable quote of this century.

However, hind sight is always 20-20 vision. So, we know that Hitler failed. But he came close . . . so close. In early September of 1940, the Luftwaffe had the RAF reeling and ready for the knockout blow. On September 15, the Luftwaffe delivered what was to be that knockout punch. As wave after wave of German bombers and fighters swept over Southern England and RAF fighters were pressed to the extreme, Churchill asked Air Marshall Park "What reserves have we?" Park told him "We have none". The last time a commander-in-chief had been told that was Napoleon at Waterloo.

But England prevailed. In looking back on the so-called "Battle of Britain", Churchill put the conflict into perspective with memorable statements: "Never was so much owed by so many to so few" and "If the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say: 'This was their finest hour!'".

It is this awesome pivot point in our history that **Lucasfilm Games** brings to us in its latest release: *Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain* (*TFH*).

"It's New, It's Improved"

TFH is built upon the award winning *Battlehawks 1942* (*BH*), CGW's Action Game of The Year 1989. After designing his award-winning game, however, designer Larry Holland did not sit back on his laurels. Instead, he took *BH* as his starting point and built an even more amazing product. For example, the camera replay feature which was so unique in *BH* has been improved. Now you can select from a variety of replay viewpoints such as cockpit view, target view, bomb's eye view (remember Slim Pickins in *Dr. Strangelove*?), etc. Now you can save your best replays to disk ("Look honey, here's where I shot down three ME-109's in 15 seconds").

You can fly individual missions or play in a complete campaign from either side. As the British player, you act as the flight leader of a Hurricane or Spitfire squadron. As the German player, you can choose between flying fighters such as the ME-109 and ME-110 (fighter/bomber) or flying a wide range of bombers (Stuka dive bomber, Junkers 88, Dornier 17, Heinkel III). In bombing missions, you can switch between pilot, bombardier, and up to five different gunner positions.

In addition to actually flying in the missions, you get to plan the strategy for your side. As the British player, you have some advance knowledge as to the German targets for the day. You assign available aircraft to CAP (combat air patrol) missions: assigning locations, altitudes, etc. During the actual flight, however, the computer will control all planes except your personal aircraft.

As the German player, you select what type of aircraft you want for the day's mission, what target or targets you want to attack, and your flight plans to execute those attacks.

The success or failure of your individual mission is abstracted to affect other computer controlled missions for the day. If you as a British pilot fare well, the whole RAF fairs well and vice-a-versa.

The graphics are outstanding. Aircraft, ships, and explosions are rendered in beautiful bit-mapped graphics that are almost photographic in realism, while terrain is created using polygon fill graphics. The combination of the two graphic systems succeeds very well. When you combine the graphics with the room-rumbling high fidelity sound effects available to AdLib Sound Board users, you get a game that grabs you and holds on and on and on.

In addition to the almost 100 training and combat missions (both individual and campaign), *TFH* has a mission building utility that allows you to design your own missions. One reason Holland included the mission building utility was to give owners of slower IBM machines a utility that would let them create smaller actions. With a dozen or so planes in a battle the program can slow down considerably on slower machines (Remember, not only do the dozen aircraft need to be "flown" by the CPU, but so do the dozens upon dozens of bullets that may be in the air at any one time). With the mission builder you can create small "skirmishes" that are less taxing on the CPU.

Roll Calls Make For Role Playing

TFH keeps track of pilots' service records. You begin by giving a pilot a name and taking him through a number of individual missions to build up his rating. When you get a stable of rated flyers, you will be ready to start the campaign game. I named my pilots after people in our office. In the campaign game it added a touch of involvement fun to watch my fellow cohorts fly about me, some winning, some losing, some dying (so long Johnny, we hardly knew ya!).

For those of you that are not patient enough to fly the dozens of missions necessary to build a solid roster of seasoned pilots

(Continued on page 28)


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BROADSWORD +2, CURSED BERSERKING *
SHORTSWORD +4, DEFENDER
(CTRL-D) DELETE, (CTRL-P) NEW PARAGRAPH, (CTRL-Q) QUIT, ANYTHING ELSE TO INSERT?
APPLE II DISPLAY
DATE: MAR/APR 348 SCORE: -50
WHITESTONE MOVEMENT PHASE
PRESS (SPACE) TO EXIT
GRASSLAND(-) X,Y:25,18
APPLE II DISPLAY
ROLAND
HITPOINTS 61
AC 6
IBM DISPLAY

(Continued from page 26)



Checking out the "Big Picture"



Assigning Pilots to Missions on the Flight Roster Screen



Closing in on an ME-109

you can cheat the system via DOS. Simply build one pilot up to a decent score then go into DOS and duplicate and rename that pilot's file several times. In this manner, you can take your one veteran and create a dozen more just like him in five minutes.

Documentation is the Finest

The photo-filled rulebook (nearly 200 pages) is simply the finest I have ever seen. The 39 page historical overview gives one of the best summaries of the Battle of Britain I have read in any book, much less in a computer game. The 11 page Pilot Perspectives chapter gives us first hand accounts of the battle organized by date. The actual rules are divided into pre-flight, in-flight, and post-flight sections. There are superb sections detailing the various aircraft and flight tactics as well. The rulebook alone deserves an award.

But Nothing is Perfect

TFH was designed and playtested primarily using the mouse interface. While it works well with the mouse, it is not as user friendly for those of us that prefer using the joystick or keyboard. Flight using the joystick is just fine, however getting around the pre-flight screens, executing the off-disk protection routines, and operating the VCR Playback feature are tedious with anything but the mouse. The joystick tends to be too sensitive to rapidly point the cursor at the small screen "boxes/buttons" on the pre-flight

(Continued on page 30)

Win A Free Trip To Britain!

In search of the best air combat simulation player among CGW readers, Lucasfilm Games and Computer Gaming World announce *Their Finest Hour: The Battle of Britain* Competition.

Grand prize is an all-expense paid trip to England with game designer Lawrence Holland and computer Gaming World Editor-in-Chief Russell Sipe concurrent with the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Departing September 1990, the highlight of the two-week tour is *Battle of Britain Day*, September 15, 1990 and the 50th Anniversary ceremony in London. Led by Valor Tours' Bob Reynolds, Secretary of the Royal Air Force Association, the trip includes the Farnborough Air Show, numerous visits to U.S. WW II air bases in East Anglia, extensive museum and airfield tours, and even a Cambridge pub notorious for its RAF patrons; all to recreate this monumental event 50 years later.

The competition is three-tiered with players first submitting a qualifying pilot record by March 15, 1990. If chosen to compete at Level Two, players submit required campaign play records and original missions they have created using the "Mission Builder" feature, due by May 15, 1990. The five finalists chosen for Level Three then play each others original missions on or before June 15, 1990. Top scorer is then off to England in time for the 50th Anniversary!

COMPETITION RULES

LEVEL ONE

1. Submit a pilot record saved to disk with the required qualifying score--a minimum of 1000 points.

• First create a pilot from the roster screen during flight briefing. Any pilot type is acceptable. Consult page 81 of *Their Finest Hour* manual for more information. All types of pilots are eligible.

• After your qualifying pilot has reached the minimum requirements of 1000 points, copy your pilot file onto a 5 1/4" or 3 1/2" floppy disk.

Note: As a pilot is named, the program creates a DOS file name using one of the following extensions, based on type of pilot. This file name should be used in copying.

PLANE	EXTENSION NAME
Spitfire/Hurricane	.RAF
BF 109	.109
BF 110	.110
Stuka	.J87
Ju88/He111/Do17	.BMB

Example: For a Spitfire pilot named Joe the file name is JOE.RAF.

2. 100 disks will be chose randomly from those received and reviewed for qualifying requirements.

3. The qualifying pilot disk must have name, address, and phone clearly labeled on the outside and must contain only one pilot record file. Disks with more than one file or whose identifying label is illegible will be disqualified. Only one entry per person.

4. Send disk to address below. Entry must be postmarked by March 15, 1990. All disks received during all three competition levels become property of Lucasfilm Games and cannot be returned.

Battle of Britain COMPETITION
LUCASFILM GAMES
P.O. Box 10307
San Rafael, CA 94912

5. The 100 qualifiers chosen will be notified by mail and will receive full instructions and requirements for Level Two play at that time.

Employees, contractors, or freelancers of Lucasfilm Ltd., Electronic Arts, or Golden Empire Publications, are not eligible to enter. Void where prohibited.



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(Continued from page 28)



German Waist Gunner's Position



Using The Bombsight to Attack a British Airfield



VCR Replay of a Bombing Run on an Airfield

and VCR screens. Consequently I find myself going to the arrow keys to move around. Tuning the radio (a transparent off-disk protection device) can require dozens of key strokes to accomplish. It should take a lot less.

Unfortunately the same problem exists on the otherwise excellent VCR Replay feature. The "buttons" of the VCR machine are small and consequently hard to "hit". The ability to use the joystick to "fly" the camera (as was done in *Battlehawks*) is definitely preferable to the push button approach of the new VCR. Additionally, assigning keys to functions such as "rewind" (R), "stop" (S), "play" (P) would have been a simpler way to handle the interface.

The Secret Of Your Success

Here are some tactical suggestions from *TFH* designer Larry Holland and playtester Noah Falstein.

Fighters

Approaching bombers from the rear is a constant temptation since the trigonometry of your attack will often cause him to fly past your line of attack and present you with his rear. Turning onto his rear presents you with a temptingly stable target. Avoid this when possible. Not only because a bomber's best protection is rear facing, but also because it gives the bomber an equally stable target - you.

Approaching from the side is better than approaching from the rear because it takes a deflection shot to hit you.

The best approach to a bomber, however, is from his front and 45-50% above him. From this aspect you will dive through his blind spot. None of his gunners will be able to bring you to bear.

If the target bomber is not close to dropping his bombload (i.e. you have some time to play with him). You might try teasing one of his gunners by dancing in and out of range in hopes that he will fire long range low hit percentage bursts at you. The goal is to have him run out of ammo so that you can waltz in untouched and paste him.

Bombers

There is no question that it takes practice to succeed at level bombing. Remember to make your bomb runs from the same altitude and speed each time.

For the less than expert bombardier, letting the computer fly the bombers while you fly escort tends to produce better results.

On campaign missions, stagger your bombers in distance, area, and altitude (especially altitude).

Although it is not foolproof it is possible to sneak in low under the RDF. Stay under 1000 feet.

This one takes practice. Put the nose gunner in autofire mode. Go back to the pilot position. Slow the bomber to near stall speed. Enemy fighters tend to zoom past you into your forward fire zone. As the computer-controlled nose gunner fires you can adjust his aim by adjusting your flight path and "walking" his tracers to the target.

Conclusion

What is going to make *TFH* as successful in the marketplace as it is under the critic's magnifying glass is the fact that Holland has made a conscious effort to make *TFH* as appealing to the action-oriented gamer as it is to the serious wargamer. Both groups are attracted to the game. At the time this review went to press, *TFH* was compiling the highest RID (reader input device) rating of any game in our history. *TFH* is headed for computer game greatness. So much so that one is tempted to say, "This is Lucasfilm Games' finest hour". **CGW**

Reynolds Reminisces



Bob Reynolds (2nd from right) and crew with their Lancaster

The winner of the LFG/CGW's "Their Finest Hour" Tournament will go on a tour of Britain during the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain. The tour will be led by Bob Reynolds, Secretary of the Royal Air Force Association. We met Bob a few months ago and talked to him about his wartime experiences.

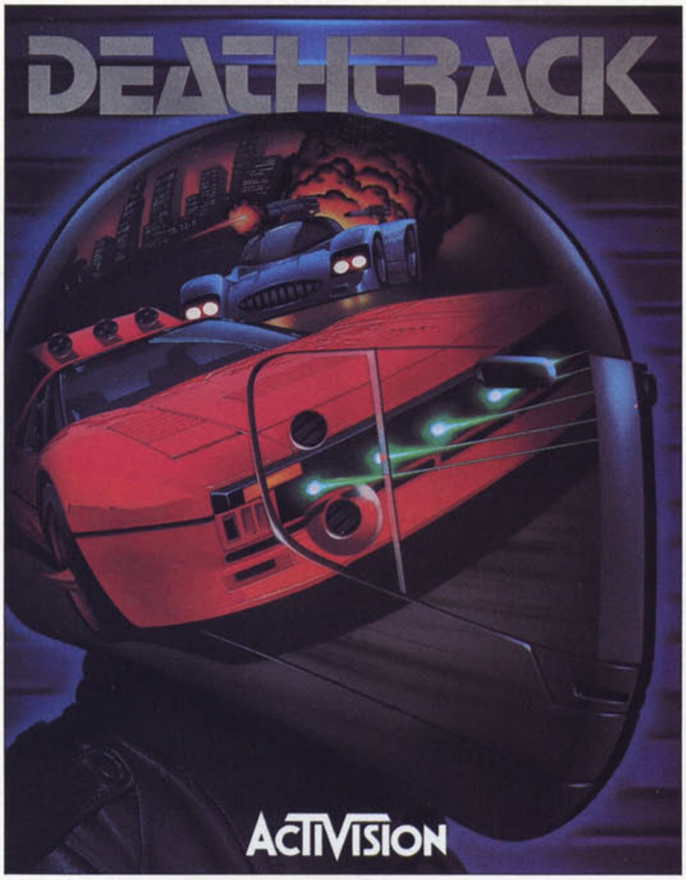
We asked him to share his most memorable image from the war. He told about the time he was standing outside his home near London during a nighttime bombing raid. He looked up and saw two Junkers 88 German bombers slowly lumbering across the face of the full moon. It was at once an awesome and fearful sight. He recalled the sense of helplessness he felt watching the enemy flying over his homeland preparing to bomb his people.

We asked Reynolds what was his most hair raising experience. He told us about a time when he ran into mechanical problems while on a bombing mission. He was forced to land his Lancaster bomber in an open field in Belgium. After the white knuckle nighttime landing (guided only by a few torches lit by local partisans) he got out of his aircraft and saw that his plane had rumbled to a halt a few feet from a huge oak tree. He was met by a French officer who directed him and his crew to a barn where they could spend the night.

Upon awakening Reynolds heard an odd scraping sound just outside the barn door. He sat up to investigate and saw a German soldier sweeping leaves!!! What had happened? Had the French pulled back during the night? Why wasn't his crew alerted? Ducking out of sight he tried to control his racing heart and to think of options. Just then the French officer strode into the barn to awake the crew for breakfast.

The German soldier turned out to be a prisoner recently captured during a German withdrawal!

Everyone on the Road is Armed and Dangerous



Hurtling through the turn, you lock-on to the lead car and fire. In less than a second, your Falcon missile slams into the target and explodes in a ball of fire. You smile to yourself —he was a good assassin, but a lousy driver. Instantly, your radar detects a Terminator bearing down on your exhaust. You swerve, but it's too late. A small mistake ends another brief career on the *DEATHTRACK*—yours.



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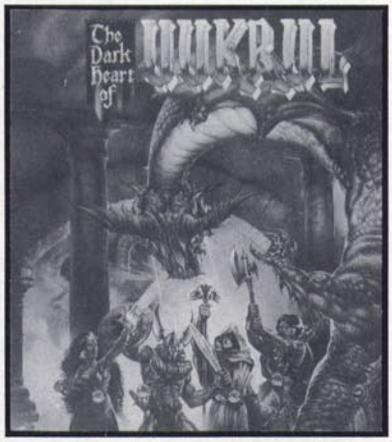
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You Gotta' Have Heart!

Broderbund's "The Dark Heart of Uukrul"

by Scorpia

TITLE:	The Dark Heart of Uukrul
SYSTEM:	Apple II with 128K
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Ian Boswell and Martin Buis
PUBLISHER:	Broderbund Software San Rafael, CA



The Dark Heart of Uukrul is your standard dungeon epic of "kill the evil wizard", sprinkled with some novel ideas and several interesting puzzles. A stalwart group of four characters must penetrate deep into the mountain stronghold of Eriosthe, find Uukrul's real heart, destroy both it and him, and then Eriosthe itself (which is pretty much in the hands of evil forces).

You begin by creating your party of four (which always contains one each of fighter, mage, cleric, and paladin). Unlike most games of this type, however, you don't roll dice or allocate a set number of points for attributes. Instead, somewhat in the style of *Ultima IV*, you answer a series of questions for each character and your responses determine the character's stats.

The questions are always the same, although there is a different series for each character class. Most of them present you with a situation and a choice of actions. For example, the fighter comes upon a troll with a bag of goodies and is asked if he/she wants to: 1) fight the troll, 2) make a grab for the sack, or 3) try to trick the troll out his little treasure. How you answer will affect various attributes. With some experimentation, you should be able to obtain the characteristics you want. Attributes, by the way, will gradually rise over time as your characters achieve new levels of experience (to a maximum of 15, as high as you can go).

The Ring's The Thing (Magic)

The game's magic is of two types: that used by mages and that used by clerics (even though both classes cast spells through the use of special rings). The rings begin with iron (the weakest), and move up through copper, silver, gold, platinum, and finally, to crystal (the strongest).

Mages have five groupings, or "Arkanas", of spells: Fire, Frost, Healing, Protection, and Knowledge. Each Arkana has its own set of rings; a ring of silver in Frost, for instance, will not allow you to cast silver-level spells in any other Arkana. You can try to cast a spell for which you don't have the necessary ring, but the results are likely to be less than pleasing. Attempt this at your own risk.

Clerics operate through the use of prayers or invocations to the four gods: Ufthu, god of war; Golthur, god of the physical self; Fshofth, god of the spiritual self; and Drutho, god of the underworld. As with the Arkanas, each set of prayers to a god requires its own particular rings.

However, unlike other games in the CRPG genre, the gods here are not always amiable. At times, they will ignore your cleric's prayers, which is bad enough. Even worse, on occasion they will be annoyed at being disturbed and end up zapping the unlucky cleric that bothered them. There is no way of telling *when* this will happen, so invocations to the gods are chancy at best. Of the four, Ufthu seemed to be the most reliable, but even he sent down a thunderbolt once in awhile.

New rings are obtained by making periodic visits to the Inner Circle (for mages) or the Hall of Temples (for clerics). If the character is judged worthy, he or she receives a new ring and the spells that go along with it. This is not related to gaining levels, as a character could pick up several new rings well before he achieves a new level of experience, and none at all when he does reach it.

Casting spells requires energy. For mages, this is measured in Psychic Points, and for clerics, in Virtue Points. These points renew automatically over time, with Psychic points regenerating much faster than Virtue Points. Since you will be relying more on your mage than your cleric for heavy firepower, this makes sense.

Thirteen Is The Luckiest Number (Mechanics)

Paladins are fighters with one special ability: they can "lay on hands" to heal the injuries of another character. Unfortunately, this can only be done in combat, which rather limits its usefulness, especially as the paladin must give up some of his or her own hit points to do this type of healing.

So with your team created, and with some understanding of what they can do, you begin the game just inside the entrance to Eriosthe. It's a one-way entrance; you can't go out again, only forward. So, you're really committed from the start.

While most of the mountain is in the hands of evil critters, there is a small enclave of humans who run a marketplace (which you must find). There you can purchase weapons, armor, food, healing, resurrections, and other necessities. Fortunately, this is one of the few areas that are free of nasty beings and you can walk around without fear of being attacked.

Another protected area is the Sanctuary. There are thirteen (lucky number!) of them set up throughout the mountain. Here, a party can safely rest to heal wounds and restore magical energy. Equipment of any kind can be stored, as well; each Sanctuary can hold up to seven items in its cache for future use.

However, the most important function of the Sanctuary is that this is the only place in the game where you can back up your save position. While you can save anywhere in the game, this is a "convenience save" only. You can do a true save (backup) *only* in a Sanctuary, and it's a wise move to do this each visit.

Travelling through the mountain is done by two methods: first is the hard way, slogging along on foot room by room, and the second, easier way is to use the system of teleport stations scattered throughout the dungeon. The catch is that you have to find these stations on foot before you can use them.

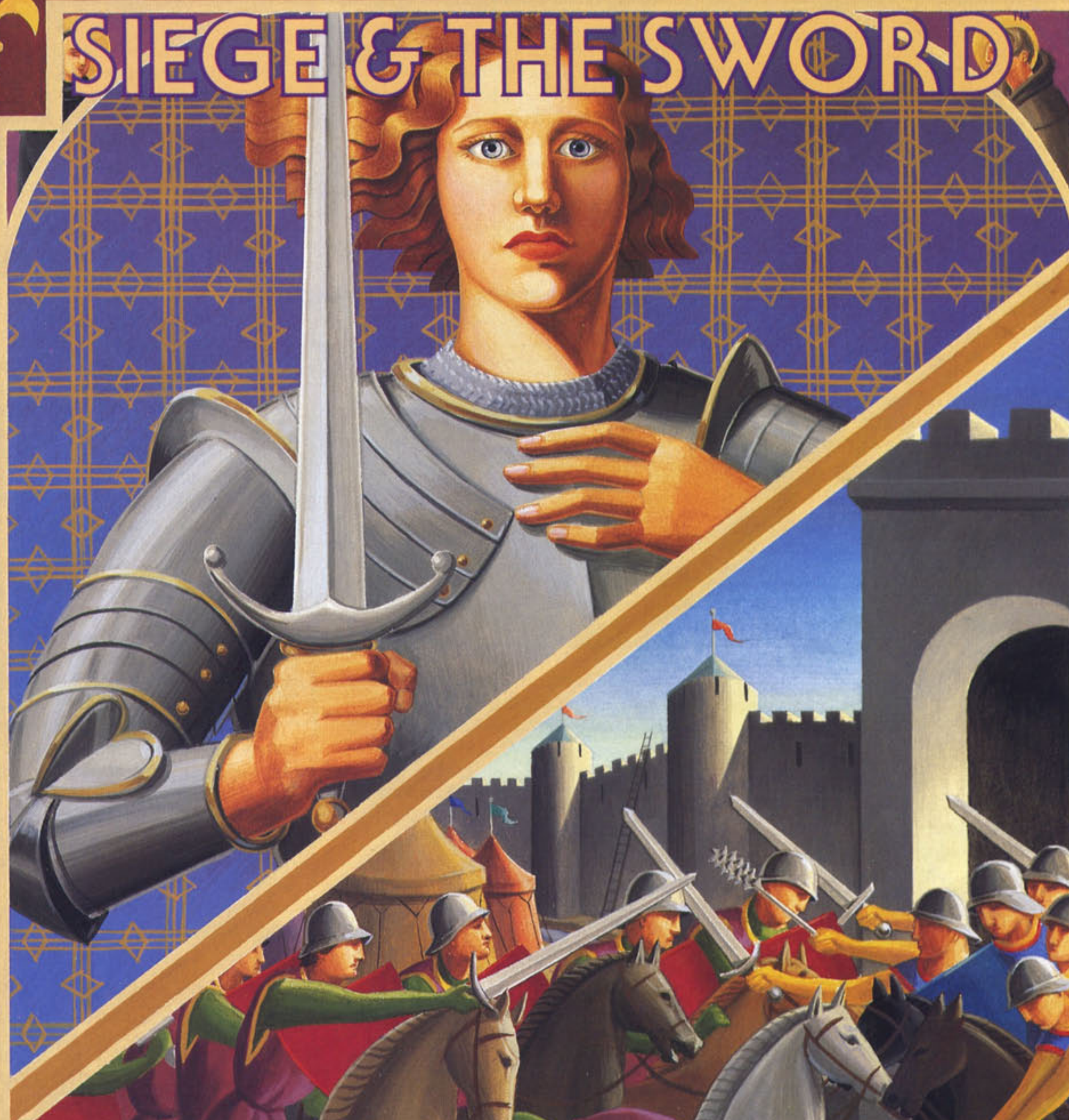
For example, the back of the manual lists the names of all Sanctuaries. However, just knowing these names will not allow you to pop in. Try to teleport to one you haven't visited yet and you will go nowhere. The same is true for the teleporters by the Inner Circle, Hall of Temples, etc.

This is a very good and well-conceived feature of the game design. There is nothing players hate more than having to fight their way out from deep in the dungeon after spending who knows how

(Continued on page 34)

• JOAN OF ARC •

SIEGE & THE SWORD



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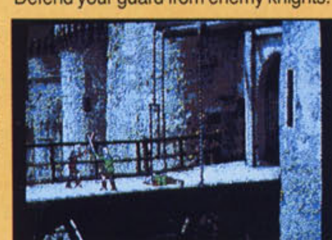
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(Continued from page 32)

The Dark Heart of Uukrul

long just to get that far in. The teleport system bypasses that aggravation entirely.

So, even if you're way out there around Urqol and you need supplies, you simply enter the teleporter and poof! you're at the marketplace. Likewise, the return trip is just as fast and easy. You can take up exploring again almost right where you left off, without wasting time, energy and magic to return. I consider this to be one of the best features in the game.

However, as I mentioned before, you have to physically locate these oases first and the way becomes (bet you guessed!) progressively harder the further eastward you go. The beginning levels are not too tough, but after that matters rapidly become more difficult as your opponents increase in nastiness.

Fight for the Rights of Your Party (Combat)

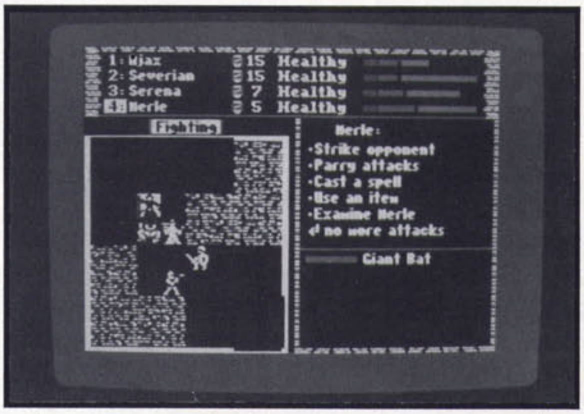
Which brings us to the combat system. Fighting takes place in a "blow-up" of the immediate area, where each member of the party and each attacking monster is represented by an individual icon. Unless you've been surprised, you may move your characters (without fear of being struck) into whatever positions you desire, providing they have room to move. This is the first half of the round.

The second half is actual fighting. Who goes first is determined by the computer. It may be someone on your side or one of the enemy. Regardless, this order is not the same every round. So, the mage who acted last in the previous round may well go first in the next.

Striking an opponent is a simple matter, you merely hit the (S)trike key. If only one enemy is close enough to hit, the program automatically targets that critter; if there is more than one, you get your choice of targets. Spells are handled in a similar fashion, although being long-distance (mostly), a choice must be made unless either (a) there is only one monster to fight or (b) the spell is an area-effect one, which will hit all enemies automatically.

Combat is generally to the death. On occasion, though, a monster *might* run from the field. The party can also try to escape, but this allows opponents who are in range a free shot at anyone they can reach (and an enemy spellcaster can reach a lot of people).

Experience points are awarded based on the relative helpfulness of each character per combat. Everyone will receive some points, but those who did more will receive more, and killing a critter usually brings the most points. This sounds fine in theory, but the execution of it does leave something to be desired. For instance, Scorpia the fighter has spent several rounds whittling down a tough monster, who is then polished off by a



spell from Malkor the mage. Scorp did most of the dirty work, but Malkor is the one who will receive the lion's share of the points.

Since just about everyone and everything outside the marketplace is hostile, much of the game is dedicated to fighting. However, between the combats, there are a number of puzzles to solve, so the game is not entirely hack and slash. Throughout the dungeon, there are mysterious diagrams whose obscure meanings must be figured out, as well as inscriptions which you need spells to be able to read. Some of the most important ones are posted around the walls of the Inner Circle. These tell you approximately where the hearts can be found.

Uukrul, you see, has hidden his life force inside an obsidian heart which, in turn, is locked inside a chalice. These six locks are magical and can be opened only by six petrified human hearts. So, part of your task is to collect these delightful items so you can get at the heart of Uukrul.

Warning: Hints follow. Those readers not desiring assistance, please skip to the section entitled "Flaws In The Ointment."

Since the designers *do* want you to win, they have placed a total of eight hearts in the dungeon, even though you need only six. Thus, if you really can't get at one of the hearts (can't find it or can't get through the puzzle or whatever), you can leave that one and go looking for another. Sometimes, redundancy has its good points (just remember, you only have to pick up six of the eight!).

Unfortunately, the real puzzles don't show up until you're almost halfway along, beginning on the dragon level just past sanctuary Urshas. This is also, in my opinion, the neatest one in the game. There is a sub-level, reached by climbing down a pit, that turns out to be, of all things, a puns and anagrams crossword puzzle, with some extremely devious (but fair) clues. Clever, that dragon.

Other puzzles wait further on, so that the second half of the game requires much more thought than the first, in particular careful reading of the many signs and diagrams. Don't neglect them; some are very important indeed. The one puzzle (if it is a real one and not a red herring) that I never figured out was the indentations covered by different-colored stains. They are found all over the level that contains the obsidian heart, but I was unable to find a connection between them and anything else in the game.

Eventually you will find your way to Uukrul's lair, hopefully with everything you need. While he does not have the usual force of cannon-fodder minions, he turns out, alas, to be the typical pushover so many of these "super evil bad guys" are in the final confrontation.

However, there is still more to be done once Uukrul has been vanquished. A sorceress must be rescued and Eriosthe itself destroyed by activating the beacon of light. So, while Uukrul's defeat is somewhat anti-climactic, at least you are not left with that flat feeling which comes from the "Hurray, you defeated the evil wizard and now the game is over" message that often shows up at these times.

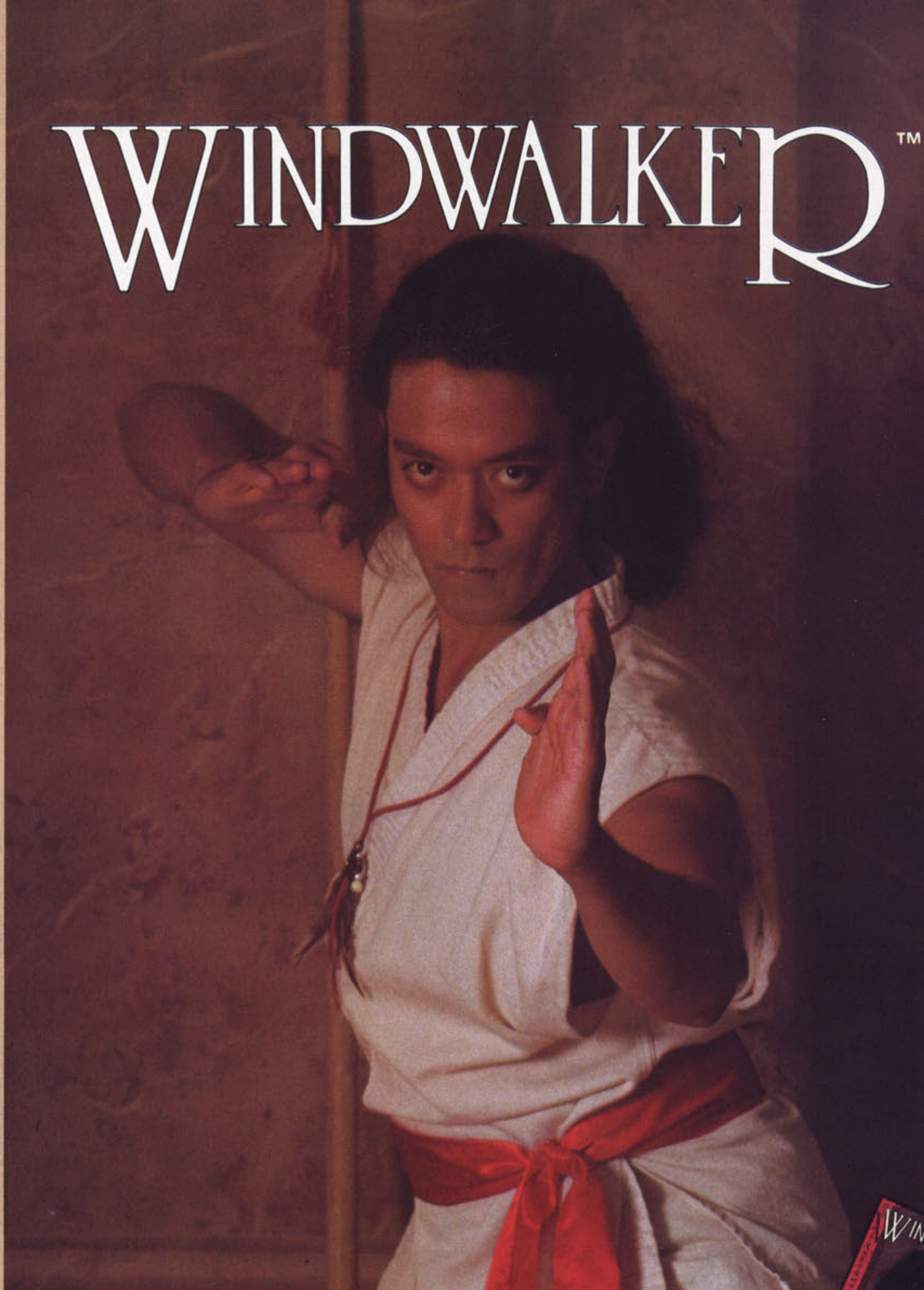
All Over The Map (User-Friendliness)

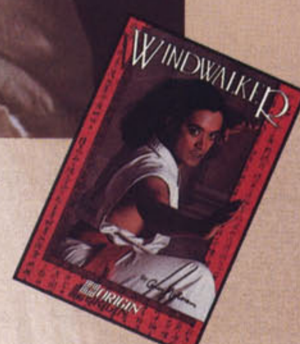
Overall, the game plays well and the auto-mapping is an adventurer's dream. The first feature of note is the ability to move around the map to virtually any place you have been. When you first call up the map, it displays, naturally, your immediate area. From there, you use the cursor keys to scroll around, including up and down stairs and pits, and through secret doors. You could, in fact, view almost the entire dungeon (when you've gone far enough) screen by screen in this manner.

This is immensely helpful, since each dungeon level has several small sub-levels reached through pits and stairs. Using the "map from here" feature will quickly show which ones you've used and which you haven't, since you can't map where you haven't been yet.

The second feature is the ability to label the map. You have the letters A-Z, which you can stick almost anywhere. You do have to keep your own notes on what

(Continued on page 69)





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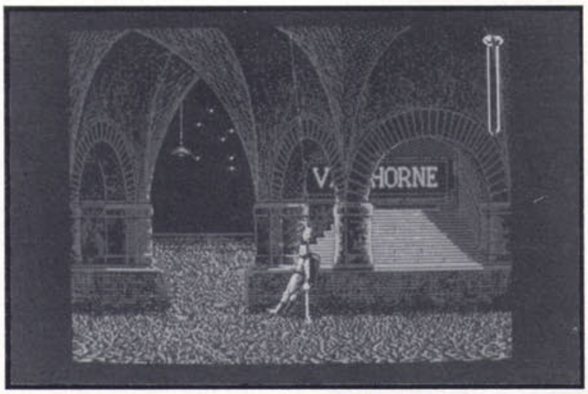
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(Continued from page 22)

Ghostbusters II

Players swing out away from the wall and crash through the window of their choice. If a room is selected that contains orderlies, they can easily be avoided by jumping out the window to the waiting rope. (**Hint:** If players have difficulty timing their jump to the rope, they should try counting the seconds the rope is out of sight. On my machine it was four seconds so I counted four seconds and jumped. I don't recommend rescuing more than one of your companions per trip, because only a certain amount of time is allotted to successfully complete the sequence.



Players must earn $55,000 in order to allow Egon to build the needed slime blower. Each job pays $10,000 to $20,000, minus charges for the damages caused. Once $55,000 is earned, Egon reports that the slime blower is complete. If the player has three positively charged slime samples, he's ready to head for the endgame. If not, he should return to the underground train station until he has found three good slime samples. Similarly, it will prove advantageous to have the whole crew out of Parkview for the big shootout with Vigo.

Walking Lady Liberty is quite a thrill. Although, given my allegiance to the personal computer camp in regards to the Nintendo versus Personal Computer controversy, I would have rather not seen a Nintendo type game controller used to guide Lady Liberty down the streets of New York. Walking the great lady down the streets is not easy, either. Idiots will drive their cars right under her feet and stepping on cars drains her energy. The clock running at the side of the screen goes from 11:00 P.M. to 12:00 A.M. If you fail to reach the museum before midnight, Vigo automatically wins.

At the museum, "Libby" smashes in and the guys slide down the ropes for the final battle with Vigo. Hitting Vigo with the proton beam weapons weakens him and, as the clock strikes midnight, he is sucked back into the painting. He still continues to battle by hurling fireballs. Unlike the other scenes in which players can get hit with three fireballs, it only takes one of Vigo's fireballs to fry a ghostbuster. If one character is fried, the next one moves in to continue the battle. If all four become Carpathian Fried Ghostbusters, the game is over and Vigo wins!

As if Vigo weren't strong enough by himself, he also has a hypnotized lackey who runs back and forth, continually getting in our heroes' way. Shooting him would be fun, except for the fact that the proton beams bounce back towards the player characters.

Vigo's head finally bursts from the painting, zipping around and shooting rapid-fire fireballs. At this point, the proton weapons become slime blowers. Would-be busters need to be careful at this point, because letting the slime-blowers get too hot allows Vigo to gain considerable advantage.

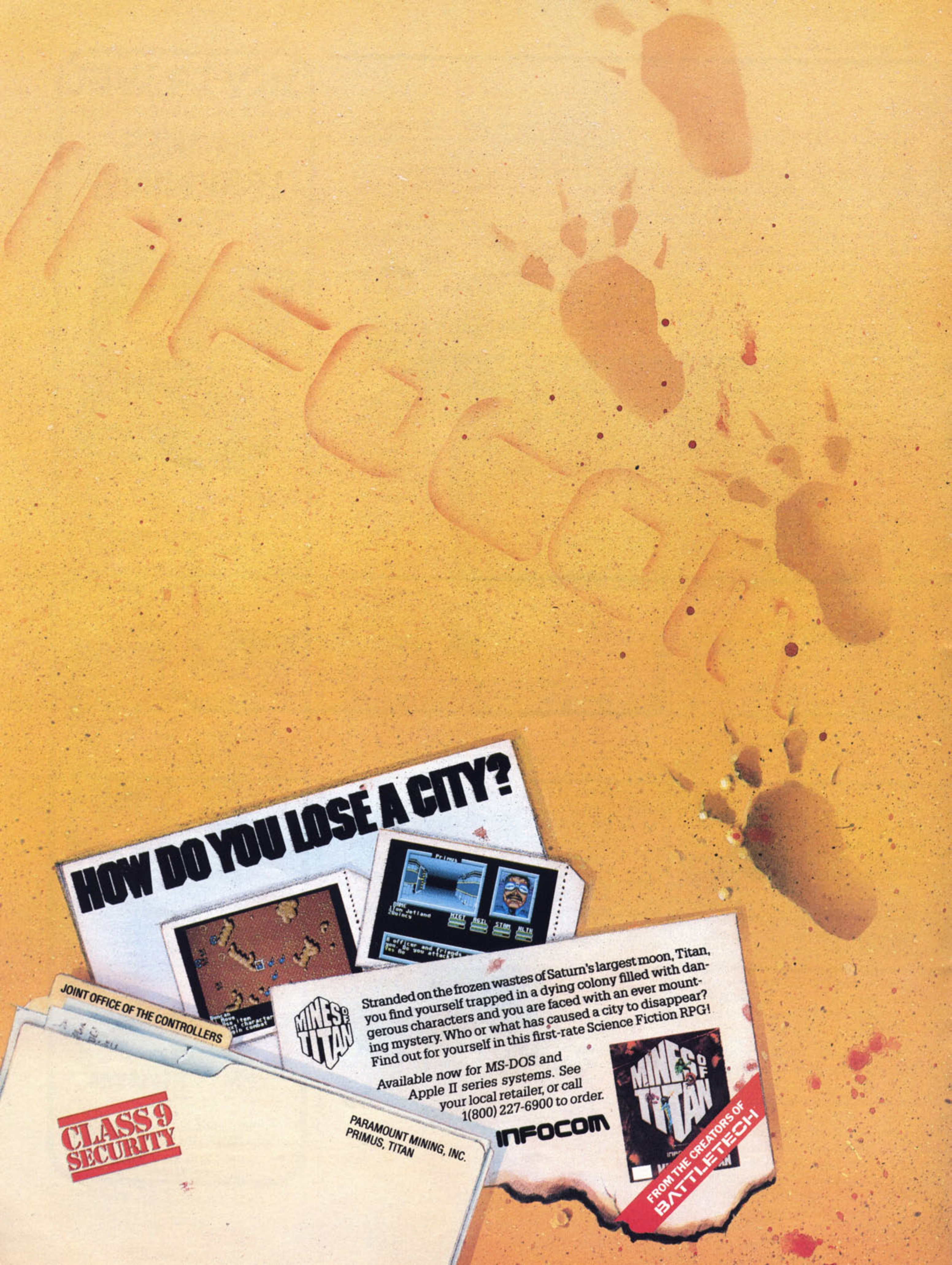
EPA Report (Conclusion)

The graphics of *Ghostbusters II* are nice, if not overly impressive. A lot of little "cutesy" details add to the overall package. For example, blowing open the outhouse in Central Park reveals a giant cockroach and "busters" shouldn't be unpleasantly surprised at what they find behind the dressing room door at Northrone's. In addition, the digitized voice tracks add to the whimsical feeling that permeated the movie.

Still, with all *Ghostbusters II* has going for it, the game must get a mixed review. Since the game can be played in less than an hour and players will probably play the game, at least, fifteen times before mastering it, some may feel that this is less than a bargain. Nevertheless, *Ghostbusters II* is well-designed and easily learned. To those who liked the movie, prefer action games, and want humor to be part of the mix, one can only assert the obvious: "Bustin' will make you feel good!" **CGW**






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Popcorn Not Included II

Access Software's "Mean Streets"

by Charles Ardai



The POPCORN NOT INCLUDED Critical Creed:

From the start, computer games have aspired to a style and a degree of polish best described as 'cinematic.' Only with today's most sophisticated techniques are significant advances being made toward this goal. However, in adopting a cinematic mode, today's games open themselves up to criticism on a cinematic level. It is not enough to achieve movie-quality software; one must also achieve *quality* movie-software.

TITLE:	Mean Streets
SYSTEMS:	IBM
PRICE:	$59.95
DESIGNERS:	Brent Erickson Brian Ferguson Chris Jones
PUBLISHER:	Access Software Bountiful, UT

It is from this critical standpoint that we will consider the new generation of "Interactive Movies." As one might evaluate separately the Functional and Aesthetic appeal of a building, we will evaluate separately the Play and the *Box Office* appeal of these games.

FADE IN: INTERIOR: MURPHY'S OFFICE - DAY - ANGLE FAVORING WINDOW

TEX MURPHY, P.I. sits at his desk with his feet up, a battered fedora pulled low on his brow. A charitable observer would assume he's concentrating on his latest case. One less charitable would assume he's sleeping. Through the window, we see the city's neon lights shutting down as the red, radioactive dawn blooms.

MURPHY (Voice-over): *Another day, another dollar, as my partner used to say. This particular morning I remember thinking, I need a case bad. Little did I know what the day would have in store . . .*

Play: Mean Street, U.S.A.

Last Sunday, Dr. Carl Linsky was found floating face-down in the San Francisco Bay. Prior to that, he was observed standing on the edge of the Golden Gate Bridge. Since no one pushed him (and there was no earthquake to make him lose his footing), the police are calling his death a suicide.

The only person who doesn't buy this story is Sylvia Linsky, Carl's daughter. Maybe it's because suicide would void Linsky's $100,000 insurance policy or maybe Sylvia just wants to see justice done, but whatever the reason, she has employed Private Investigator Tex Murphy to find out what really happened.

So opens *Mean Streets*. As Tex, the player can do several things. He can fly around California in Tex's Lotus Speeder, an aircar styled by the package artists to look somewhat like Harrison Ford's cruiser in *Blade Runner*. He can go bounty hunting for quick cash in *Mad Max*-style wastelands. He can buzz downtown L.A. and check out Disneyland. He can flirt with the lovely Sylvia, who is not only decked out in an eye-popping VGA tank-top but is also more than willing to trade meaningful glances with a handsome gumshoe.

Or, he can get to work earning the fee Sylvia's shelling out; track down leads through his secretary and street informant via a videophone and on-board fax machine; visit people involved with the case and question/bribe/threaten them into giving up useful information; search through private offices and laboratories; and hence, either solve the mystery of Linsky's death or die trying. There's quite a range of options for our boy, and this variety can be daunting. What it *should* be, however, is exhilarating. After so many game systems which straitjacket players with paper-thin illusions of interactivity, *Mean Streets* offers a fully realized environment and says, "Go to it! Explore! Go where you want, do what you want, find what you can. Be back by midnight or take the consequences. It's your choice!"

This license, this freedom, is refreshingly adult. Any computer game will necessarily set limits to the player's actions—this is the unavoidable consequence of limited memory and hardware—but a good game will push these limits as far as possible, ideally so far as to be out of sight.

Mean Streets is a good game. Everything in the game revolves around speeder travel, which can be as simple or as complex as a player wants to make it. At one extreme, players can fly the craft manually, by the seat of their pants. At the other, players can type an address into the autopilot and sit back secure in the knowledge that they will end up where they want to be.

The landing site determines the type of encounter Tex will have. Sometimes, he confronts another character in a one-on-one interrogation reminiscent of **Accolade**'s *Killed Until Dead*. At other times he enters an environment to be explored in a manner reminiscent of a Lucasfilm adventure game. In both cases, a command menu lists the player's options and eliminates the need for a text interface. The only time text input is required is during dialogues (which is as it should be).

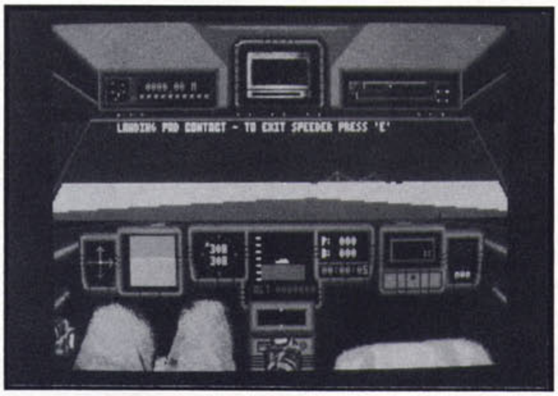
Such is the framework of *Mean Streets*: a variety of activities and graphic environments built up around a science fiction mystery plot. A *great*game would take this framework and use it to make each sequence deliciously unique, to weave the plot tightly, and to create a thoroughly and relentlessly enjoyable experience. Unfortunately, *Mean Streets* is not a *great* game.

However, as noted earlier, it is a *good* game. It lets the player wander all over and perform a variety of actions in any order he chooses. This is very much a step in the right direction as far as Interactive Movies are concerned. However, within each segment, the play mechanic quickly degenerates and becomes . . . mechanical. Take, for instance, the system of interrogation. Tex flies to a location, meets a character and is given the options:

'Question,' 'Bribe,' 'Threaten' and 'Exit.' He has amassed a list of names that are relevant to the case. The player selects 'Question' and runs down the list until it's exhausted, pencilling down any new names the suspect reveals and adding these to the list for the next interrogation. If bribing or threatening the character seems as though it will produce a few more names, he tries this. Then, he leaves.

Then, again, take the example of searching a room. Tex arrives. He walks up to each artifact (a desk, a cabinet, a computer terminal) and tests each available verb ('Look,' 'Search,' 'Open') on each visible item. Then, he leaves.

This reduces adventure gaming to its lowest level—that of list making and permutation checking—and the adventurer to his—that of packrat and automaton. If *Mean Streets* is not unduly limiting, it is, at least, unduly repetitious. If it is endlessly varied, it is endlessly predictable as well. Each new character (there are more than two dozen) is interesting both in terms of digitized, animated graphics and in terms of plot significance. At this level, then, the player looks forward eagerly to each encounter. However, the action of each encounter is identical to that of all the previous ones, and at this level the game is rather tedious.



The problem is that there is nothing challenging about what the player does. It's all a matter of invoking a simple routine over and over, asking the same questions again and again. What challenge there is comes at the trivial level of designer psychology, by which I mean the game of second-guessing the programmer: If I threaten So-and-so, will I get thrown out? If I stay to search this room, will I get caught? Granted, this uncertainty creates suspense, but it is not the sort of suspense one craves.

Occasional gun battles spice things up, but not significantly. The game's endless insistence on the need to record clues (paper is included for this purpose), to spell names properly and fully, and to search *everywhere* and ask each character about *everything* is stifling and anti-imaginative. However interesting the plot is—and it is very interesting—the means one is given for uncovering it are, to be blunt, boring. By the time you question the tenth person about Gideon Enterprises, by the time you're halfway done amassing your mountain of correlatives and cross-references, you are fascinated by the story, but bored to tears by the game.

Consider the analogy of a pointilist painting. The picture might be gorgeous, but who wants to be Seurat, placing dot after dot after dot? Or consider the life of a real detective, which is surely as methodologically dull as *Mean Streets* is. Who wants to watch that in a movie (or play it in a game)?

Part of the problem is that while the player *participates* in the investigation story, he only *uncovers* the (more interesting) murder story. Also, *Mean Streets* has the problem that's becoming endemic throughout the genre (as a result of improving graphics and sound), the game comes on six disks. This makes for lots of swapping and everything happening very slowly for those who don't have a hard drive. Still another is that most of the animation is spot animation (a blink, a frown), with the rest of each screen reserved for a slideshow of static, picture-postcard backdrops.

The biggest problem, however, is that the player is given a great deal of freedom and very little to do with it. It's like being set loose in a store that only sells canned food. You can go down any aisle and pick up any can you want, counting on each can having something tasty inside it. But you sure get tired of running the can opener after a while!

Box Office: In the Mean Time . . .

So, why is *Mean Streets* worth one's time? After all, plenty of flight simulators offer a grand tour of the West Coast and there are plenty of action games out there if it's bounty hunting one desires. If *Mean Streets* is so dull, why lay down the bucks, the hours, and the energy?

Once the player accepts the fact that the story is going to come out in dribs and drabs and that he will have to keep prodding it along every few seconds, the game becomes a blast. The player can start enjoying the content and the language of the story.

"Mean streets" is, of course, Raymond Chandler's term for the urban jungle he stuck Phillip Marlowe in and *Mean Streets* takes more than its title from Chandler. From beginning to end, it sports an authentic hardboiled attitude and voice. ("Dolores Lightbody had the face of a Saint," Murphy narrates. "A Saint Bernard." Or, how about this great line from the backstory in the instruction manual: "Her eyes were murky like mud puddles on a wet road.")

To balance this pseudo-forties tone, the game offers elements that are distinctively futuristic: the speeder, the videophone, a neo-fascist underground seeking high-tech weapons for their cause, a brain-trust of scientists who are getting picked off one by one, and so forth. The blend of the two eras is a successful one, tasting of *Blade Runner* and *The Big Sleep* but imitating neither.

The less revealed about the story the better, because it's the plot revelations that make *Mean Streets* work, but rest assured that, after a slow start, things start happening.

The first 'thing' is that an anonymous, threatening fax arrives to throw Tex off the case; from that point on, the game's a wonderful mix of high intrigue and lowlife in a world that's part chilling reality and part hard-talking, dime-novel fantasy. The clincher for me is that I'd have liked to see *Mean Streets* as a movie. The story is that much fun.

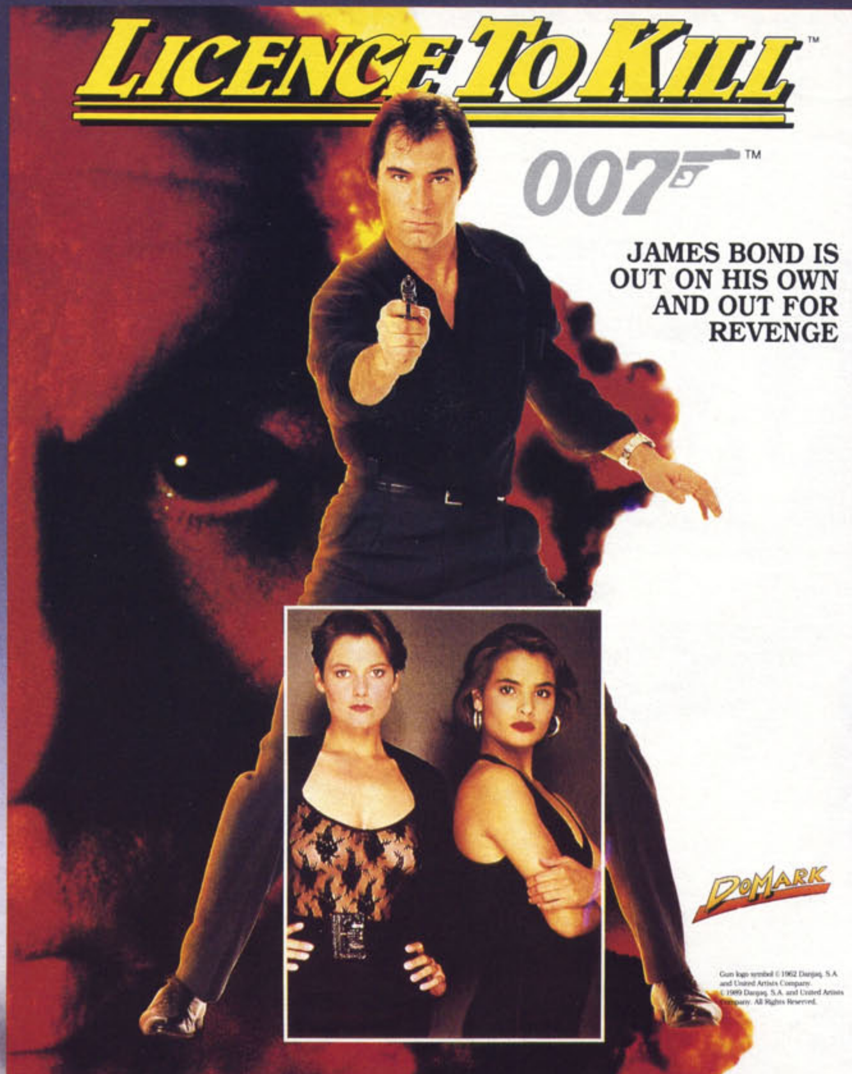
As for the amenities, the quality of the sound and graphics cannot be faulted. More animation would have been nice—and *much* more sound—but the game takes up six disks already, know what I mean? Better the space should be used to hold a great story, as it does.

The game's major new gimmick, as the package advertises, is that a handful of lines of dialogue have been digitized and are played back (sans extra audio hardware) during the game. This is the software equivalent of such cinematic ploys as Sensorama and 3-D—harmless, cute, but *big deal*. If the whole game had been done this way, maybe **Access** would have something to advertise. As it is, we're talking a small handful of pretty trivial lines ("Watch for my fax," is one I remember.).

For the most part, however, *Mean Streets* is clever and visually attractive. As with *David Wolf: Secret Agent* ("Popcorn Not Included," last month), the obstacles to the game's success are less failures of creativity within the game, as weaknesses inherent in the game system. One day, someone will hit on a system which gives the player freedom, gives him lots to do, and doesn't fall back on tiresome logic-puzzle/tree-search formulas. Until then, we'll make do with what we have.

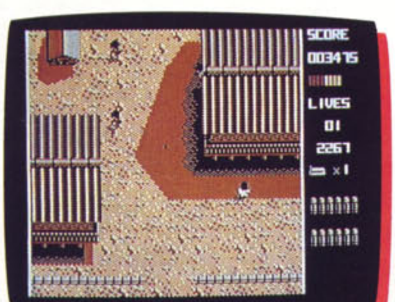
"Put Another Nickel Into . . ."

Playing *Mean Streets* is a little like watching a really good movie on a hand-crank projector. One's wrist gets tired, but it's worth it. To put it another way, it takes a lot of energy to eat one's way through a bag of unshelled peanuts, but if peanuts are something one likes, the effort is worth it. Anyone who can get past the shell of *Mean Streets*, will find a tasty kernel indeed. **CGW**



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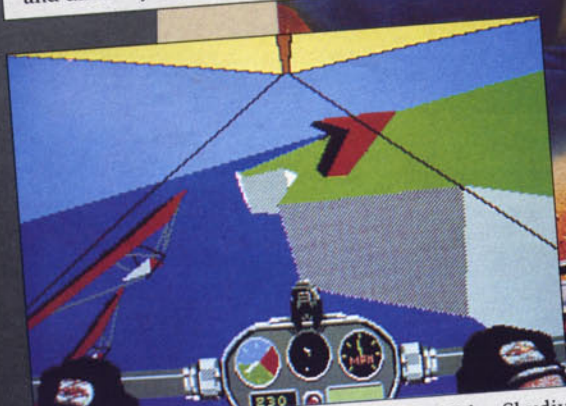
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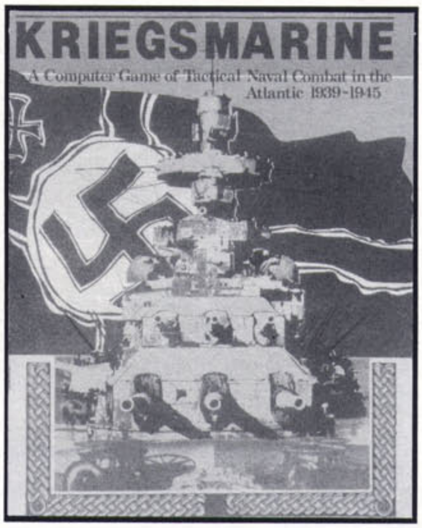
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by Lt. H.E. Dille

TITLE:	Kriegsmarine: Tactical Naval Combat in the Atlantic 1939-1945
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, Apple II, Atari ST or IBM
REVIEWED:	IBM
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$60.00
DESIGNERS:	James Baker and Steve Newberg
PUBLISHER:	Simulations Canada



During the period between the World Wars, Germany suffered a period of severe economic and political turmoil. Allied efforts to subjugate the German people actually fostered an environment in which extremists, such as Adolf Hitler, could rise to power. He formed a political rallying point for the beleaguered German people, but was hindered in his ambitions by the crippled German economy. As all economists know, nothing stimulates economic growth better than warfare. Unfortunately for the Kriegsmarine, Hitler openly admitted an ignorance of naval matters and devoted his attention, and funding, almost exclusively to support a land campaign. As such, at the outbreak of hostilities, the German Surface Fleet was ill equipped to conduct any form of power projection operations and opted to focus almost exclusively on commerce raiding. Admiral Doenitz, the infamous head of Germany's submarine campaign, was oft quoted after the war as saying, "If we would have had more U-Boats we would have won the war". This reviewer holds a somewhat broader opinion, that if Germany had possessed a stronger surface fleet to support the interdiction efforts of the U-Boats, the end result of the naval campaign could have indeed swayed in Germany's favor.

Leaving Port

Kriegsmarine is **Simulations Canada**'s first foray into the Atlantic theatre of operations during World War II. Their previous WWII naval simulations, *Long Lance* and *In Harm's Way* (Reviewed in CGW #48 and #57 respectively) focused entirely on the Pacific Theatre. Aficionados of the previous releases will find *Kriegsmarine* quite similar in execution, albeit with some minor modifications. Most of these modifications are in the pre-battle setup options delineated below. Veterans of the SimCan operating system may skip to the next section, newly reported Ensigns and aspiring commanders stand to for indoctrination.

The design team at Simulations Canada focuses upon accurate historical research and detailed modeling of the perspective of the operational level commander. To a certain extent their operating system has accomplished for naval warfare what **Strategic Studies Group**'s *Battlefront* system has done for land conflict *[Ed: Although* **SSG**'s graphics continue to improve while **SimCan** chooses not to attempt any graphic representation]. Players assume the role of the senior naval commander present for either side. As such, they determine group assignments, plot intended movement, assign missions, determine rules of engagement (when and how subordinate forces should open fire), and establish the combat doctrine of their groups. The execution of these orders is relegated to the commanding officers of the individual ships while the player retains direct control of the formation's flagship.

The program is *entirely* text based. Players track force movement and positions on a laminated map, using grease pencils to mark progress. The text messages received reflect incoming radio traffic, such as enemy sighting reports, and those things which may be directly observed from the flagship. Consequently, engagements may occur unbeknownst to the force commander or, as is more often the case, without a clear picture of their success or failure until the after action report. This type of model graphically illustrates the uncertainties inherent in warfare, and is infinitely more realistic than omnipotent overviews that allow the player to control every aspect of the game down to the color of the captain's knickers.

The War Room

Players may opt to play any of nine historical engagements provided with the game or construct one of their own with a highly flexible, user friendly scenario builder. As would be expected, the scenario builder allows the player to manipulate many of the factors which are pre-set in the historical battles, therefore a brief discussion of its features may serve to illustrate the versatility this product contains. Next, a brief description of the historical scenarios will be provided.

Players must initially select the type of scenario to be played from the following list: Open Ocean Encounter, Channel Dash, Coastal Engagement and Convoy Defense. Each of these types contain certain basic objectives for either side other than the obvious one of engaging and destroying enemy warships. For example, if a convoy scenario is selected the British forces must escort a slow moving group of merchants from the west to the east map edge. German forces must attempt to either sink the convoy or force the British to scatter it in an attempt to escape. If the latter occurs, the convoy is more susceptible to air and submarine attack. Also, those merchants which do succeed in exiting unmolested are only worth half of their original victory point value.

Prior to determining force composition, players must select a year for the scenario, as well as whether they wish to be bound by historical availability. The former option determines the status of technical improvements within a class of ships (i.e: radar capabilities etc.) while the latter excludes ships from selection until their historical completion dates and after their actual loss date. After forces have been selected and organized into groups, each group must be assigned a specific mission in keeping with the overall objective. Counter force missions are usually assigned to major combatants to engage and destroy the enemy although, if one expects to be outnumbered (as is often the case for the German player) a shadow mission might be more appropriate. Shadow missions will attempt to engage the enemy in a running battle from long range, often an ideal position for the German Pocket Battleships to attain. Screening missions are often assigned to light forces such as Cruisers and Destroyers to reflect their traditional roles of protecting the flanks of the main battleline and attempting to engage major combatants with torpedoes. Two other scenario specific mission types also exist. The Close Convoy Escort function is appropriate for British forces in a Convoy Defense scenario, while the Break Through Enemy mission is required for German forces in the Channel Dash scenarios.

Other options include sea state determination, selecting the time of day and assigning the degree of air superiority for both sides. The first option determines the degree to which gunnery accuracy is affected by the weather. As to the selection of the time of day, other than the obvious day or night choices, players may

(Continued on page 65)

See Reader Input Device on page 88

The Categories

Strategy (ST): Games that emphasize strategic planning and problem solving.

Simulation (SI): Games based on first person perspectives of real world environments.

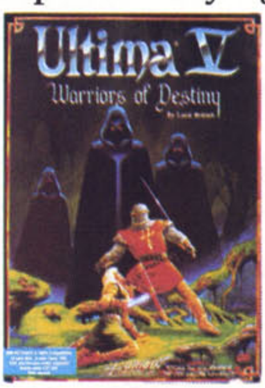
Adventure (AD): Games that allow you to take your alter ego through a storyline or series of events.

Role-Playing Adventures (RP): Adventure games that are based on character development (usually involving attributes).

Wargames (WG): Simulations of historical or futuristic warfare from a command perspective.

Action/Arcade (AC): Computer games that emphasize hand-eye coordination and reflexes.

Top Role-Playing



Top Simulation



THE TOP TEN GAMES

No.	Name	Mfg.	Machine	Cat.	Avg. # Resp.	Rating
1.	*Their Finest Hour*	*LucasFilm*	*I*	*AC,SI*	*30*	*11.07*
2.	*F-19 Stealth Fighter*	*MicPr*	*I*	*SI*	*73*	*9.85*
3.	*SimCity*	*Maxis*	*Am,C,I,M*	*ST,SI*	*59*	*9.77*
4.	*Sword of Aragon*	*SSI*	*I*	*ST,WG*	*22*	*9.67*
5.	*Chessmaster 2100*	*Toolwrks*	*Many*	*ST*	*28*	*9.43*
6.	*Populous*	*EA*	*Am,ST*	*ST*	*56*	*9.41*
7.	*Red Storm Rising*	*MicPr*	*C,I*	*ST,SI*	*58*	*9.30*
8.	*Battlehawks 1942*	*LucasFilm*	*Am,I,ST*	*AC,SI*	*74*	*9.29*
9.	*Lords of Rising Sun*	*Cnmwre*	*Am*	*AC,ST*	*50*	*9.22*
10.	*Ultima V*	*Origin*	*Ap,I*	*RP*	*97*	*9.12*

No.	Name	Mfg.	Machines	Cat.	Avg # Resp.	Rating
11.	Wasteland	EA	Ap,C,I	RP	109	9.11
12.	Might & Magic II	NwWrld	Ap,C,I	RP	46	9.04
13.	Bard's Tale III	EA	Ap,C	RP	74	9.03
14.	Space Quest III	Sierra	Am,I	AD	34	8.97
15.	Pool of Radiance	SSI	Ap,C,I	RP	97	8.96
	Romance/3Kngdms	Koei	I	ST,RP	31	8.96
17.	Indy: Adventure	LucasFilm	Am,I	AD	23	8.93
18.	Overrun	SSI	Ap,I	WG	23	8.91
19.	Falcon	SpcHolo	Many	SI	62	8.90
20.	NFL Challenge	XOR	I,M	ST	86	8.87
21.	The Magic Candle	Mndcrft	Ap,C,I	RP	43	8.80
22.	Genghis Khan	Koei	I	ST,RP	32	8.79
	Project Stealth Ftr	MicPr	C	SI	29	8.79
24.	Battles of Napoleon	SSI	Ap,C	WG	30	8.77
	Battletech	Infocom	Am,I,ST	RP	48	8.77
	Fire Brigade	Panther	Am,I,M	WG	22	8.77
27.	Airborne Ranger	MicPr	C,I,ST	AC	74	8.76
28.	King's Quest IV	Sierra	Many	AD	58	8.75
29.	Neuromancer	Interplay	Ap,C,I	AD	31	8.70
30.	Battlechess	Interplay	Am,I,ST	ST	58	8.68
31.	Typhoon of Steel	SSI	Ap,C	WG	43	8.67
32.	Ballistyx	Psygns	Am,ST	AC	20	8.65
	Police Quest II	Sierra	I,GS	AD	43	8.65
	Zany Golf	EA	Am,I,ST	AC	31	8.65
35.	Curse of Azure Bonds	SSI	Ap,C,I	RP	57	8.64
36.	Sword of Sodan	Discvry	Am,GS	AC	27	8.63
37.	Nobunaga's Ambition	Koei	I	ST,RP	51	8.53
38.	Carrier Command	Rainbird	Am,I,ST	AC,WG	49	8.51
	Panzer Strike	SSI	Ap,C	WG	68	8.51
40.	Silent Service	MicPr	Many	SI	257	8.50
41.	Hostage	Mndscpe	Am,I,ST	AC	28	8.47
42.	Dragon Wars	Interplay	Ap	RP	21	8.43
43.	688 Attack Sub	EA	I	SI,ST	48	8.42
44.	Arkanoid	Dsc/Taito	Many	AC	69	8.38
	Wings of Fury	Brdbnd	Ap	AC	52	8.38
46.	Strike Fleet	EA	Ap,C,I	WG	79	8.37
47.	Rocket Ranger	Cnmwre	Am,ST	AC,AD	75	8.32
48.	Leisure Suit Lry II	Sierra	I,GS,ST	AD	52	8.31
	TV Sports Football	Cnmwre	Am	AC,ST	48	8.31
50.	Modem Wars	EA	C,I	ST	24	8.29
51.	Manhunter	Sierra	Many	AD	72	8.25
52.	Police Quest	Sierra	Many	AD	98	8.23
53.	Starglider II	Rainbird	Am,I,ST	AC	65	8.22
54.	Jack Nicklaus' Golf	Acclde	Am,C,I	AC,ST	28	8.21
	Three Stooges	Cnmwre	Am,C,GS	AC	68	8.21

THE HALL OF FAME

The Games In CGW's Hall Of Fame Have Been Highly Rated By Our Readers Over Time. They Are Worthy Of Play By All.

Bard's Tale I
Chessmaster
Dungeon Master
Earl Weaver Baseball
Empire
Gettysburg
Gunship
Kampfgruppe
Mech Brigade
Might & Magic
M.U.L.E.
Pirates
Starflight
Ultima III
Ultima IV
War in Russia
Wizardry

No.	Name	Mfg.	Machines	Cat.	Avg # Resp.	Rating
56.	Battlegroup	SSI	Ap,C	WG	36	8.19
57.	Abrams Battle Tank	EA	I	AC,SI	31	8.16
58.	Tetris	SpcHolo	Many	AC,ST	46	8.13
59.	Vette!	SpcHolo	I	AC	26	8.12
60.	Stealth Mission	Sublogic	C	SI	36	8.11
61.	Shiloh	SSI	Ap,C,I	WG	54	8.09
	Zork Series	Infocom	Many	AD	218	8.09
63.	Faery Tale Adventure	Micllsn	Many	RP	59	8.07
64.	Speedball	Cnmware	Am,C,I	AC	35	8.06
65.	Russia	SSG	Ap,C	WG	61	8.05
66.	Sentinel Worlds	EA	I	RP	71	8.04
	Techno-Cop	Epyx	C	AC	23	8.04
68.	Test Drive II	Acclde	Am,C	AC	42	8.02
69.	WC Leader Board	Access	Many	AC,ST	97	8.00
70.	Leather Goddesses	Infocom	Many	AD	136	7.99
71.	Breach	Omntrnd	Am,M,ST	ST,RP	114	7.98
72.	Enchanter	Infocom	Many	AD	115	7.97
73.	Jordan vs Bird	EA	C,I	AC	47	7.96
74.	Prophecy	Activsn	Am,I	AD	32	7.92
75.	Wizardry V	Sir-Tech	Ap,I	RP	43	7.88
76.	Eternal Dagger	SSI	Many	RP	72	7.85
77.	Manhunter 2	Sierra	I	AD	26	7.81
78.	Rommel	SSG	Ap,C	WG	20	7.80
79.	Omega	Origin	Many	ST	49	7.77
80.	Halls of Montezuma	SSG	Many	WG	44	7.75
81.	Anc Art of War At Sea	Brdbnd	I,M	ST	108	7.74
	Phantasie III	SSI	Many	RP	105	7.74
	Space Rogue	Origin	Many	AC,AD	31	7.74
84.	Phantasie	SSI	Many	RP	147	7.69
85.	Star Saga I	Mstrply	Many	AD	37	7.66
86.	War in Middle Earth	Melbrne	Many	ST	57	7.65
87.	Bard's Tale II	EA	Many	RP	166	7.64
88.	Grand Prix	Acclde	Am,I,M	AC	46	7.63
89.	Sorceror	Infocom	Many	AD	71	7.62
	Spellbreaker	Infocom	Many	AD	93	7.62
	Wizard's Crown	SSI	Many	RP	133	7.62
92.	Dec. Battles III	SSG	Ap,C	WG	23	7.57
	Hitchhiker's Guide	Infocom	Many	AD	198	7.57
94.	Balance of Power	Mndscpe	Many	ST	70	7.55
	Gold Rush	Sierra	I,M,ST	AD	20	7.55
96.	Demon Stalkers	EA	C	AC,AD	57	7.54
97.	Shadowgate	Mndscpe	Many	AD	66	7.53
98.	Quarterstaff	Infocom	M	RP	23	7.52
	Wishbringer	Infocom	Many	AD	81	7.52
100.	Legacy of Ancients	EA	AP,C,I	RP	134	7.50

Top Strategy



Top Action/Arcade



Top Adventure



Top Wargame



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IBM & Compatibles, Amiga

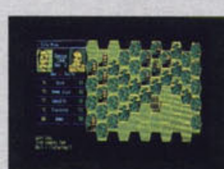
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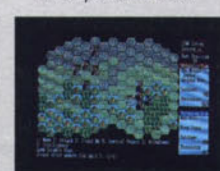
Genghis Khan

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- *Characters with distinct personalities*





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Finalist:
1989 Strategy Game of the Year
Computer Gaming World Magazine

IBM & Compatibles, Amiga

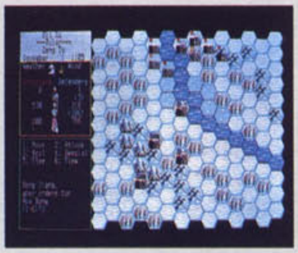
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Strategy Simulations

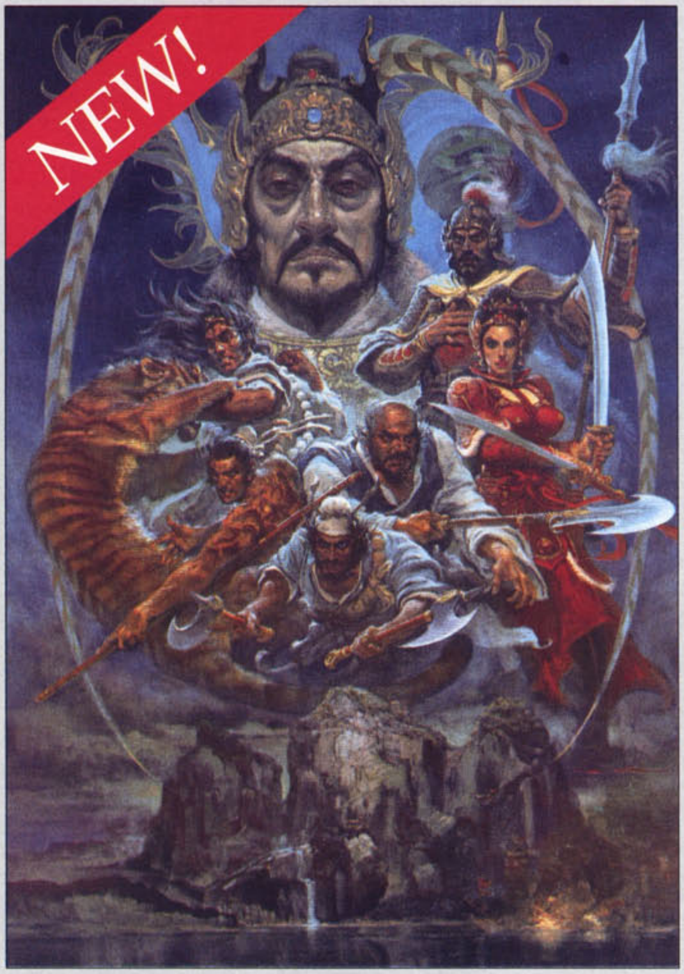








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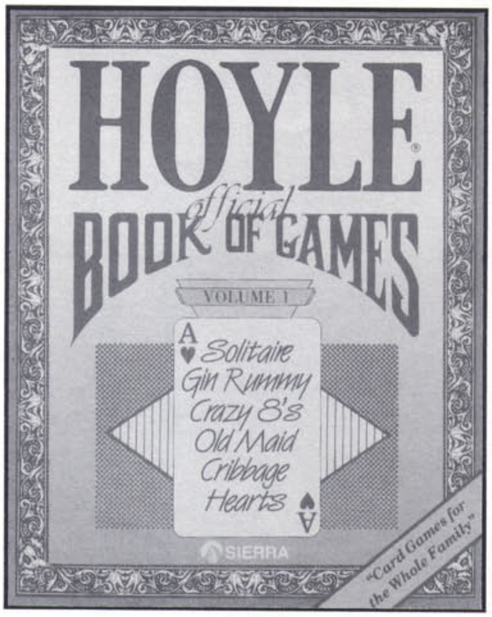
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 Circle Reader Service #32

These Characters Are Real Cards

Sierra's "Hoyle's Book of Games: Volume 1"

by Michael S. Lasky

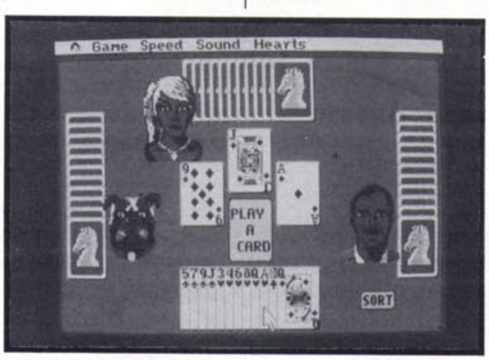


TITLE:	HOYLE OFFICIAL BOOK OF GAMES VOLUME 1
SYSTEM:	IBM (CGA or Hercules minimum) (mouse/joystick optional) (Supports Roland MT-22, Ad-Lib, Game Blaster, and others)
PRICE:	$39.95
DESIGNER:	Warren Schwader
PUBLISHER:	Sierra Coarsegold, CA

My sister Laurel *has* to be the slowest card player in the world. No matter what the game, she takes her time rearranging her cards, studying them, and plotting her next move as if it will change the course of history. We are talking s-l-o-w, folks. Annoyingly slow.

But my sister has nothing on the gang of 18 that populates Sierra's new card game compilation, *Hoyle Official Book of Games, Volume I*. The idea of the package is good. Let players choose from Solitaire, Hearts, Old Maid, Gin Rummy, and Cribbage. Then, let them select one or more players from a palette of eighteen. The variations are seemingly endless, cutting out the obligatory predictability that seems to ruin most card game simulations, but running the package of six card games on my 12 MHz IBM clone was a lesson in patience. Then, I had the chance to operate it on the lightning quick Everex 25 MHz VGA system. You got it—still as slow as playing *Ms. PacMan* without a joystick. True, the VGA screen made for a pretty picture with razor sharp graphics, but the pacing of the game mitigates against full enjoyment.

That one of the games does *not* follow the exact rules set up in *Hoyle's Book of Rules* is another matter. Cribbage is the obvious culprit with scoring techniques that are absolutely unique to this package. The other games follow the rules all right, but are really children's games and offer no great excitement.



CGA or higher graphics are required, but EGA or better is almost a necessity since CGA graphics are in four ugly colors and resolution is barely acceptable. This is primarily because the cards appear scrunched together instead of full-faced on most of the game screens, reducing their easy visibility. Manipulation of the cards is a two-part process. First, you select the card to throw and then you validate it by clicking with cursor key or mouse click. A mouse is *highly* recommended since the cursor keys are awkward and slow to use—and if there is anything Hoyle does *not* need is something else to slow it down.

The 18 expert and amateur players that can be chosen as opponents in the various games include the remarkably sleazy Leisure Suit Larry; Warren Schwader, designer of this product; Colonel Henri Dijon, a blowhard and title character of *The Colonel's Bequest*; and Princess Rosella, daughter of King Graham of Daventry and protagonist of *King's Quest IV*. Oh, yes, there is even Bulldog, a card playing dog. Each is shown full-faced, complete with moving facial features. Herein lies the best part of the game for most people, the humor involved in interacting with the familiar **Sierra** characters. If you like insults, kibitzing and conversation that's consistent with characterization, you'll probably enjoy this game's approach. Roger Wilco complains of being in the wrong game, Larry makes malodorous remarks, and various characters add to the table talk by recounting their adventures in other **Sierra** games. Those of us who prefer competition over comedy may find the humor grating, however. True, the conversation feature *can* be turned off - but not totally!

The package's best executed game is Klondike, the solitaire game. It's good for a number of reasons. Foremost, the cards are spread out full-faced so they are readable for a change. Then, again, maybe it's because, it *is* solitaire and I was not subjected to the cartoon character style 'conversations' which the selectable characters interrupt with. Also, the player is given the choice of how the game will be played—basically, how the cards will be dealt from the deck.

Cribbage comes complete with a full lifelike peg scoreboard. Nevertheless, even in high res EGA and VGA graphics, it is difficult to clearly see the pegs or know which set belongs to which player. Gin Rummy is passable. Even though the cards in your hand can be sorted by suit, by number, and in a matrix, it is still somewhat difficult to play the game because the screen layout, because of scrunched up cards, impedes easy card recognition. Despite this, the price of *Hoyle's Official Book of Games Volume 1* is reasonable enough to make the package worth considering. For those that want Cribbage and Gin Rummy with all the bells and whistles, as well as tournament play capability, **Software Toolworks**' *Cribbage King/Gin King* has more to offer. For those that want more than those card games, this set offers a higher entertainment factor *if* one is willing to put up with its incredible plodding speed and its built-in prejudice for EGA screens and mouse owners.

Perhaps, my sister is not so slow afterall. **CGW**

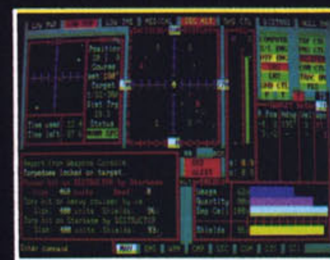


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Many readers have requested a review of "Blitzkrieg at the Ardennes" and "White Death", two titles from a small publisher called Command Simulations. "Blitzkrieg" came first, followed by "White Death", a product based on the boardgame published by Game Designers' Workshop. This review introduces the style of these games and will be followed in February with a more detailed look at the newest game, "White Death".

Amiga in the Ardennes

Command Simulations' "Blitzkrieg at the Ardennes"

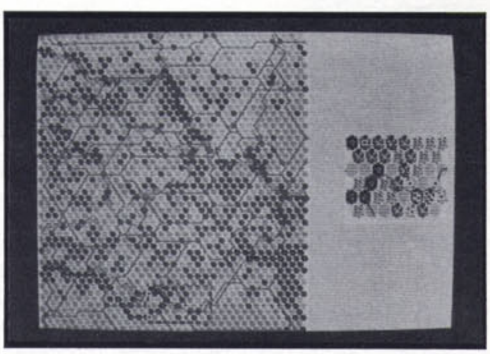
by Robert A Hottin

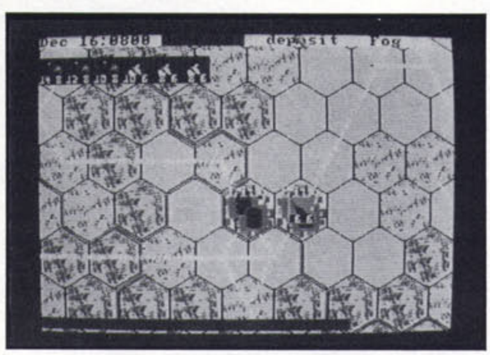


TITLE:	Blitzkrieg at the Ardennes
SYSTEM:	Amiga (with 1 MB)
# PLAYERS:	1-2
PRICE:	$59.95
PUBLISHER:	Command Simulations Bldg. 3, 297 North Street Hyannis, MA 02601

What happens when an army's intelligence service tells a general exactly what the enemy is about to accomplish, but the general is too preoccupied with his own plans to take any heed? That is exactly what happened on 16 December, 1944. General Bradley had been forewarned of Hitler's plans for an Ardennes offensive, but he simply accepted the conventional wisdom which stated that the Germans lacked fuel for a major offensive. As usual, the conventional wisdom proved to be a mixed bag, partially correct and partially in error. At 0530 on 16 December, German infantry utilized the cover of inclement weather to assail the American position in a line from Monschau (the northernmost point of attack) to Echternach. The "schwerpunkt" of the attack forced the Allied position nearly 50 miles back before the offensive stalled (because of lack of fuel) on Christmas Day and the Axis was beaten back from 26 December to the end of the month.

Blitzkrieg at the Ardennes is a simulation of the German offensive in the West in December, 1944, the so-called "Battle of the Bulge" or "Wacht am Rhein". It is a visually attractive game which combines some elegant new features with an old-fashioned boardgame design. The use of on-screen dice rolls and an opening title sequence with a cartoon Hitler that will leave players howling are some of the animated extras that make *Blitzkrieg at the Ardennes* different from the average computer wargame.


The "Big Picture"


Movement Screen

The map is, as boardgamers would suspect, a hexagonal grid (1,700 hexes) superimposed over the terrain which extended from Antwerp in the west to the Siegfried Line in the east. When players are making tactical decisions, the map zooms into a view of eight hexes by six hexes. In both cases, the terrain symbols are easily deciphered by veteran wargamers. Perhaps the nicest facet to the map views is the ability to have the best of both worlds, the "big picture option". In this view, the player is able to view the entire map on the left three-quarters of the screen, while examining a more detailed view on the right side of the screen. This option is a tremendous aid to game play and is simply a visual treat!

The units themselves are based on division-level formations. On-screen, they resemble nothing so much as the old-style square counters used in traditional board games. German units are red and black, while Allied units are blue and green. There are armored, infantry, mechanized infantry, paratrooper, and artillery units available in the game. Each counter features the standard information, including unit symbol, combat strength, and movement points.

Zones of control are operative in the game and combat is generally mandatory between adjacent opposing units. Even the combat results table will be instantly familiar to boardgame aficionados with its references to "Defender Back 2", "Exchange", and "Defender Eliminated".

Blitzkrieg at the Ardennes is not simply a boardgame, however. Several novel fea-

(Continued on page 75)



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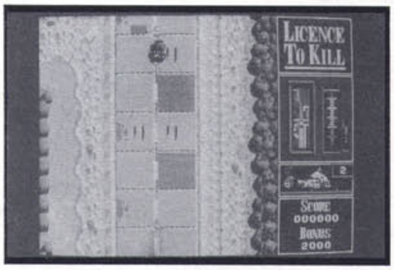
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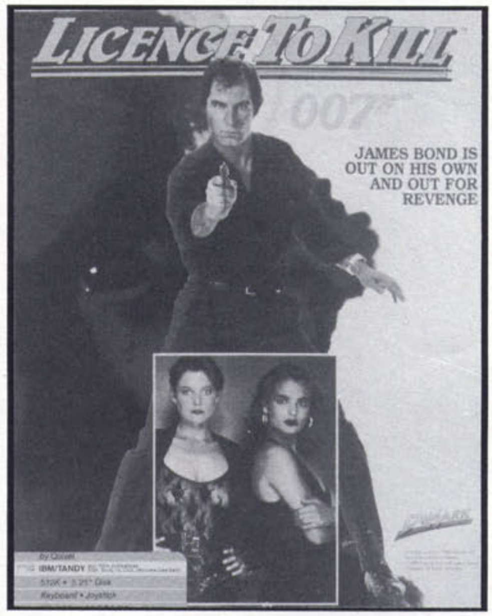
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Nobody Does It Better

By Yung Min Choi

Who does the best job at portraying James Bond? Connery? Moore? Lazenby? Dalton? *You*? That's a question for you and your computer to solve by utilizing **Broderbund**'s *Licence to Kill*, the U.S. version of a game originally released in Europe by **DoMark**. In the game, players become a vengeance-seeking James Bond as he seeks to destroy the drug smuggler Sanchez.





TITLE:	Licence to Kill
SYSTEMS:	IBM (Amiga, Atari ST and C-64 planned)
PRICE:	$29.95
DESIGNER:	Quixel & John Kayanagh
PUBLISHER:	Broderbund Software San Rafael, CA

The graphics are clean and sharp. Strangely enough, however, the different IBM graphics cards are supported via three separate disks (No big deal, it just seems somewhat inefficient). Also, there isn't much music or sound to enhance the overall gaming experience. It's amazing how soon one gets used to sound board support.

The game consists of six arcade scenes. In the first scene, players fly an attack helicopter over a runway-pursuing Sanchez in a jeep. This segment is deceptive. Player's don't really *have* to catch the jeep! The real goal of the segment is to survive the gauntlet of gun emplacements. The jeep will stop and wait. In fact, the slower this segment is played the better. The faster the helicopter goes, the lower it flies in comparison to the ground and hence, closer to enemy fire.

Scene two is, perhaps, the most challenging. Bond leaps from the helicopter and begins a foot pursuit of Sanchez. Sanchez leaves his minions behind to ambush our hero. Five hits take one of Bonds computerized lives away. 007 only has a fifteen shot Beretta, but if he uses careful strategy he can pick up a machine gun and extra magazines for his pistol (Funny I thought those guys were carrying Smith and Wessons, not Berettas).

Scene three sounds simple, but it's really not. Players will have to line up their helicopter with the tail of Sanchez's escaping plane so that Bond can be lowered by rope onto the plane. This takes great care. Sometimes, it can be completed quickly and sometimes, it just takes a little patience.

What's a James Bond adventure without an underwater sequence? 007 decides to stop a drug drop. So, he dives into the water and must avoid the boats which are shooting at him. He also can destroy the drugs and earn a scoring bonus. Finally, he lines up with the seaplane and fires a harpoon into its pontoons.

Hang on! Scene five is a thrilling water ski chase. Players attempt to dodge rocks and other objects while reeling in the rope behind the seaplane. The patterns are fairly easily learned and no previous waterskiing skill is required.

Those "big wheels start movin' on" in scene six. James must stop Sanchez, who has hidden his drugs in 18 wheeler tanker trucks, from reaching the border. This is accomplished by lining up the plane with the first truck that appears and jumping onto the tanker when the white square appears. The player can then play demolition derby to his heart's content. The idea is to destroy every tanker in turn until you finally catch Sanchez. Time is running out, so don't be slow.

If the player is not a devoted arcade addict, he will probably find that *Licence to Kill* can be a "license to bore". There is no puzzle-solving, thrill of discovery and exploration, or, with the exception of hoarding bullets in scene two, resource management. Instead, it is a very difficult arcade challenge. *Licence to Kill* is often reasonably entertaining, but *strictly* for the arcade-oriented player.

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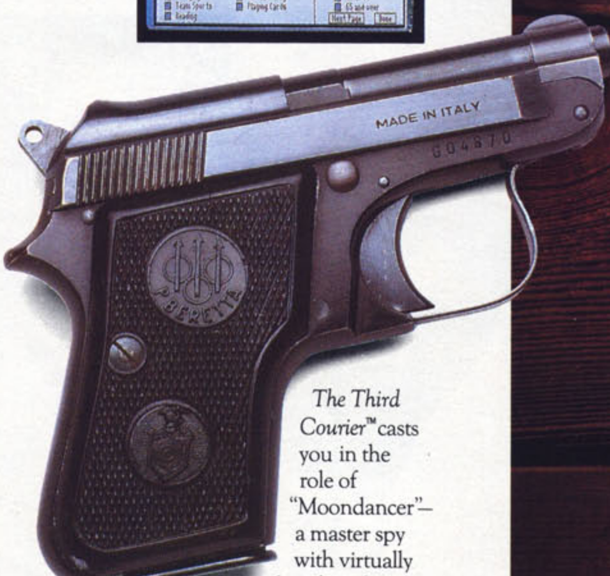
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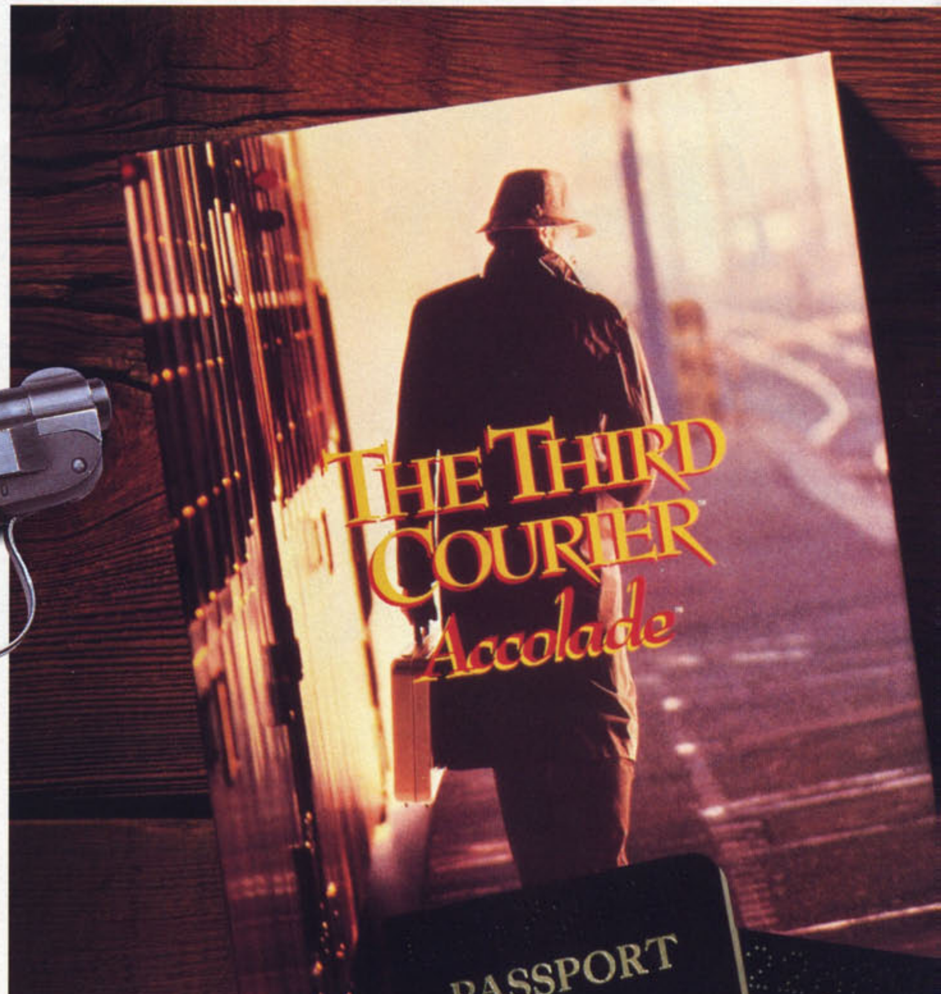
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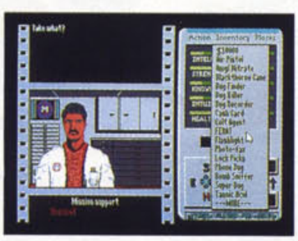
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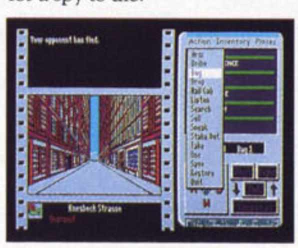


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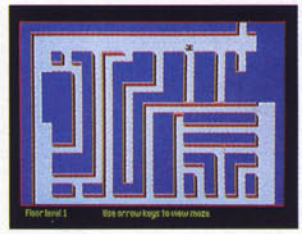




Actual game screens from IBM PC EGA version of the game. Other versions may vary.

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(Continued from page 20)

HERO'S QUEST™ I

pain on your opponents' faces when you get in a good shot. They really look like they've been hit. A very nice touch!

So anyway, you wander around, avoiding the nastier critters for the moment, and seeing what's what in the land. There are many curious places and things to see, such as the Spore-Spitting Spirea, the Frost Giant (no, really, don't try fighting him!), Baba Yaga's hut (chicken legs and all), Magic Mountain ("Trespassers will be toad!". . . my favorite sign), the dryad (a tremendously pretty animation sequence), the Antwerp (weird!), and Erana's Peace (Hint: absolutely the *best* place to spend the night) among others.

Then, you have to start making some sense of it all. The best way is to go slow, doing a little at a time. There isn't, as far as I could tell, any particular time limit here (although some individual situations are time-dependent when you're actually in them, such as the brigands' mess hall). Gather information by talking to everyone, and put the pieces together as you get them.

Many of the puzzles can be solved in any order (and in different ways), but the big three must be done in order: finding the baron's son, rescuing his daughter, and taking care of Baba Yaga. Of course, you won't be attempting these right at the start; they should be left for late in the game when your character has advanced in ability and staying power.

That still leaves you a quite a lot to do in the game, and since there isn't any specific order you need to follow for much of it, I will just give some hints for various puzzles.

Spirea: grabbing a spore isn't hard. Fighters and thieves can use physical methods; mages have magic at their disposal (read up on the spells). Check your list of skills (for non-mages) to see what might be useful here.

Healer's ring: the location is pretty obvious. The same method that worked with the Spirea will work here.

Frost Giant: It's just a matter of ample supply. Several trips are necessary.

Goblin cave: There is no way inside. The goblins are useful only for fighting to increase your skill.

Brigand Fortress: There is no way in by the front door. In time, you will learn about a back way in.

Antwerp: Walk carefully and you'll have no problems. The critter is weird, but not hostile.

Fairy dust: They only come out at night.

Baba Yaga: By the time you're ready for her, you should know what you need and have it. However, for an amusing sequence, do pay her an early visit. The skull outside on the gate will tell you how to get into the hut.



The Graveyard: A good place to avoid at night, unless you have a death wish or the undead repellant.

The Cave by the waterfall: You can't climb up (although perhaps a thief with very good climbing skill might manage it; I wasn't able to test that out), but you do have to knock on the door. Remember the Spirea. Also, once up there, be very careful where you position yourself when the door opens. Save the game after you get up there as a precaution.

The Wizard: Unless you're a mage, he is only a source of information (some of it important) and a lot of baaaad jokes.

The baron's son: All you need is kindness and a key. Getting the key is, of course, a trifle harder. Visit the tavern in Spielburg afterwards.

Inside the fortress: Once past the Minotaur guard, you should not have to do any real fighting. The most difficult part, due to timing, will be the mess hall. Save before you go in. You are likely to die the first few times, until you have seen everything you're up against, and know exactly what to do. The hardest sequence is dealing with the guys who look like, well, the Three Stooges. This requires using the candelabra, chandelier, and table in the right ways and at the right times. Tricky, this one.

Locked doors around town: Unless you're a thief, they aren't important. Sorry, but that's how it is.

Troll: He has some treasure, but you can bypass him if you prefer (he's not easy to kill); he isn't important to solving the adventure, even if his name is Fred (but he ain't my Fred, who doesn't have a drop of Troll blood in him).

As you can tell from the above, the puzzles are mainly just a tad over the introductory level. Ordinarily, this would cause the more experienced gamers to skip it. However, while I, myself, prefer the tougher adventures, I found this one fun to play, simple though it was. That in itself is quite an achievement (grin). Combined with the outstanding animation throughout the game, the beautiful graphics, the many touches of genuine humor, and the surprisingly well-integrated role-playing aspects, *Hero's Quest I* is a definite winner. If you need a break from the more serious dungeoneering or adventuring games, pick this one up for a pleasant vacation.

Bug Alert: There are, however, a few problems with the game that you need to know about, especially if you have the original version of HQ. If you are playing in high-speed hero mode, turn it off when: (a) trying to enter Baba Yaga's front door; (b) when entering the secret entrance to the brigand cave; and (c) when leaving the brigand leader's room by the secret exit. Also, you should absolutely avoid the graveyard at night unless you have the undead repellent active. If you are ever chased by ghosts before then, the repellent won't work. Sierra knows about these problems, and they are being repaired. By the time you read this (if not before), corrected versions of the game will be out.

Well, I see by the invisible clock on the wall it's that time again. Remember if you need help with an adventure game, you can reach me in the following ways:

On Delphi: Visit the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu). On GEnie: Stop by the Games RoundTable (type: Scorpia to reach the Games RT). By US Mail (enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you live in the United States, or Fred will eat your letter!): Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring!

 CGW

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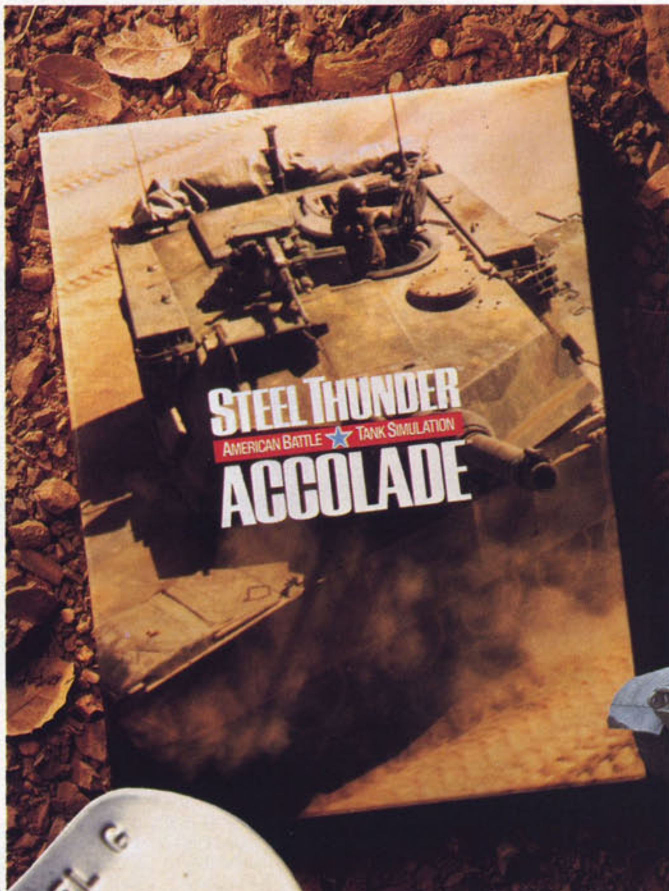


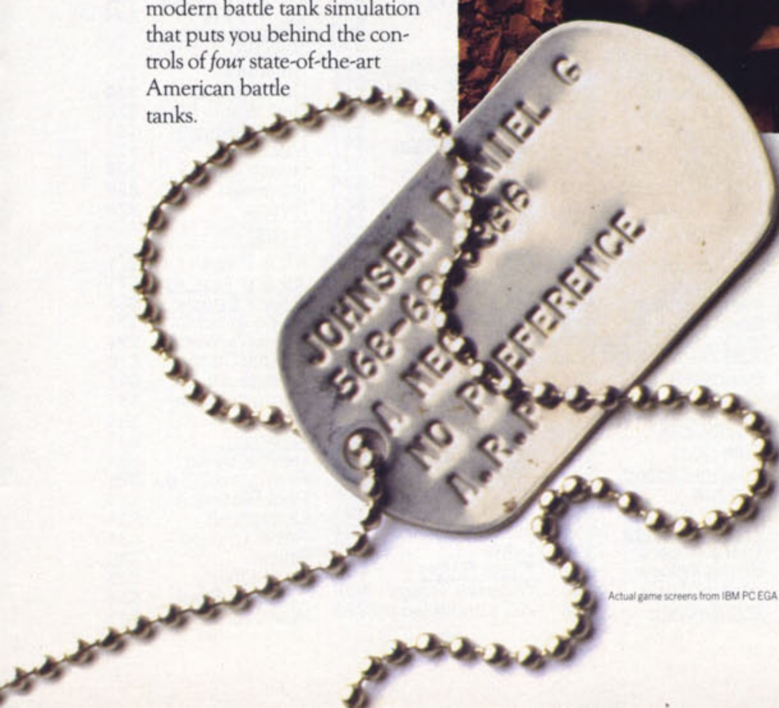
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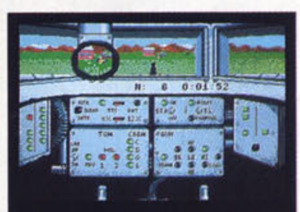


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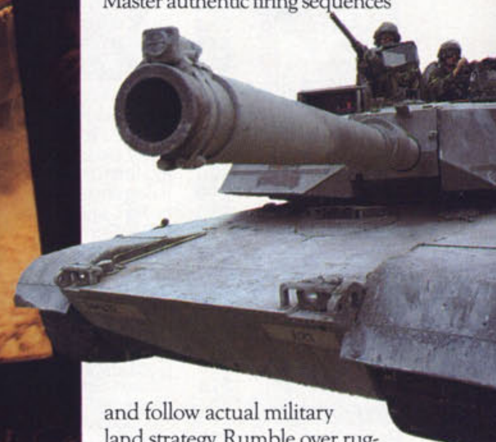


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- Destr Escort $28
- Gunship $28
- Pirates $31
- Pro Soccer $24
- Red Storm $31
- Silent Service $24
- Stealth Fighter $28

MINDSCAPE
- Gauntlet II $21
- Hostage $21

ORIGIN
- Auto Duel $28
- ***Knights Legend*** $34
- ***Omega*** $34
- ***Space Rogue*** $34
- ***Tangled Tales*** $21
- Times of Lore $28
- Ultima Trilogy $41
- Ultima IV or V $41
- ***Windwalker*** $28

C-64

SIMULATIONS CANADA
- Fifth Eskadra $42
- Golan Front $42
- Grey Seas GS $42
- ***In Harm's Way*** $42
- Long Lance $42
- Seventh Fleet $42

SSG
- Battlefront $28
- Carriers War $34
- Civil War I-III ea. $28
- Europe Ablaze $34
- Fire King $28
- MacArthur $28
- Montezuma $28
- Normandy $28
- Reach Stars 3 $28
- Rommel $28
- Russia $28
- Run 5 issue #13 $4

SSI
- ***AD&D Asst. #2*** $21
- ***Azure Bonds*** $28
- Demons' Winter $21
- First Germany $34
- Gettysburg $41
- Heroes Lance $21
- Hillsfar $28
- Kampf or Mech $41
- Napoleon $34
- Overrun $34
- Panzer Strike $31
- Phantasie I-III ea. $28
- Pool of Radiance $28
- Rebel Charge $34
- ***Storm Europe*** $41
- Shiloh $28
- Typhoon Steel $34
- Wargame Constr $21
- Warship $41
- Wiz Crown I or II $28

ETC. . .
- ***Arkanoid II*** $21
- ***Aussie Games*** $21
- Battle Tech $28
- Blue Powder $34
- Flight Sim II $34
- High Seas $34
- Middle Earth $28
- Might & Magic $28
- ***Might & Magic II*** $28
- Rebel Univ $24
- Risk $28
- ***Robo Cop*** $24
- Stealth Mission $34
- Tetris $17
- ***Thud Ridge*** $21
- Wizardry Trilogy $28
- WC Leader Board $28

APPLE

ACTIVISION
- ***Dragon Wars*** $34
- Maniac Mansion $24
- Neuromancer $34
- Rampage $24

BRØDERBUND
- ***Art of War*** $28
- Art of War at Sea $31
- ***Heart Uukrul*** $34
- ***Prince Persia*** $24
- Europe or USA $31
- Carmen World $28
- Wings of Fury $24

ELEC. ARTS
- Bard's Tale 2 or 3 $34
- ***Earl Weaver*** $28
- Hunt Red Oct $28
- ***Madden Football*** $34
- ***Magic Candle*** $34
- Marble Madness $12
- 7 Cities of Gold $12
- Starfleet I $34
- Strikefleet $12
- Wasteland $12

GENERAL QTRS
- Action Atlantic $30
- Midway $30
- Prelude Jutland $30
- Raid Atlantis $30
- River Plate $30

LANCE HAFFNER
- Courtside Bkball $28
- Full Count B.ball $28
- Pro Basketball $28
- 3 in 1 Football $28

ORIGIN
- Auto Duel $28
- ***Knights Legend*** $34
- ***Omega*** $34
- ***Space Rogue*** $34
- ***Tangled Tales*** $21
- Times of Lore $28
- ***Ultima Trilogy*** $41
- Ultima IV or V $41
- ***Windwalker*** $28

SIM CANADA
- In Harm's Way $42
- Long Lance $42
- ***MBT Germany*** $42
- ***Northern Fleet*** $42

SIR-TECH
- Wizardry Trilogy $34
- Wizardry IV $41

SSG
- Battlefront $28
- Carriers War $34
- Civil War I - III ea. $28
- Europe Ablaze $34
- MacArthur $28
- Reach Stars 3 $28
- Rommel $28
- Russia $28

SSI
- AD & D Assist. #1 $21
- ***AD & D Asst. #2*** $21
- ***Azure Bonds*** $34
- Battle Antietam $34
- Demon's Winter $21
- Eternal Dagger $28
- Gettysburg $41
- Kamp or Mech $41
- Napoleon $34
- ***Overrun*** $34
- Panzer Strike $34
- Phantasie 2-3 ea. $28
- Pool Radiance $34
- Questron II $31
- Rebel Charge $34
- Shiloh $28
- Sons Liberty $28
- Typhoon Steel $34
- Warship $41



The Psychology of Computer Games

by Michael C. Robinson, Roger Thomas and Kenneth Weaver

Michael Robinson (his Ph.D. is due to be conferred in Spring, 1990) and Dr. Roger Thomas are statistical psychologists, currently teaching at Texas Christian University. Dr. Kenneth Weaver teaches statistical psychology at Emporia State University. The following article is based on Reader Input Device statistics compiled over the last year. We publish this analysis in hopes that the material provided will allow all of us an insight into ourselves, our hobby and the entertainment software industry as a whole.

What attracts you to a particular computer game? Its cover art, the name of the manufacturer, a review in *CGW*, a friend's recommendation, the type of gaming adventure it represents? How do you determine the satisfaction level of a game? Is it worth the price? Does it hold your interest? Do You rush home in breathless anticipation of another chapter in an unfolding saga? Is the game too difficult, too boring or is it a wondrous escape into a world of fantasy and magic? Why did you buy this software? Will you buy its sequel? Do all of your friends enjoy it as much as you? Do some of your friends love the game and others find it trivial? These questions are representative of the growing research into the psychology of computer games, a field that we are exploring with the same enthusiasm we experienced in the Lands of Sosaria, Werdna's dungeons, Skara Brae, the Russian front, the South Pacific, the North Atlantic, and Arth.

As psychologists, it is our job to investigate the mind, including the processes by which people acquire and use information to make evaluations and decisions. For example, it would be desirable to determine how people assess a game's attributes in order to form an opinion of and eventually, to make a purchasing decision regarding that game. It would also be relevant to examine the strategies people develop to meet the objectives of the game and how these strategies are applied. This type of information cannot be observed directly, but can be inferred from responses to questionnaires or other experimental methods. In turn, these responses can be analyzed using statistical tests to extract trends or relationships. Working with data supplied from *CGW*'s "Reader Input Device", we have attempted such an analysis.

Exploring CGW's Hall of Fame

The initial step in the procedure is to construct an array of the ratings data suitable for *multi-dimensional analysis*. First, we made a chart of the ratings themselves with the games listed across the top and the months down the side (fig. 1). Then, we manipulated this chart into a correlation matrix to determine how each game's ratings changed in comparison to all the other games (fig. 2). The values in a correlation matrix will range from 0.000 (very low) to 1.000 (very high). A high number would indicate that the ratings for the two games changed from month to month at a similar rate. A positive number means that the ratings changed either up or down together. A negative number means that when one rating went up, the other went down.

Therefore, these correlation values may be interpreted as an index of the similarity between games. A multi-dimensional analysis of the correlation matrix will convert all of the similarities between the games to distances, determine the number of dimensions needed to display any relationships between the games, construct a graph of the distances so that each axis of the graph represents a different dimension and then, plots each game onto the graph. An analysis which found only one dimension would be plotted as a single line; an analysis which found two dimensions would be seen as a graph with an X axis and a Y axis; and an analysis which yielded three dimensions would show as a chart with three axes (X, Y and Z) depicted.

Once the graph has been constructed, (Fig.3) the known attributes of each game are examined to see which ones fit the graph in such a way that the X, Y and Z dimensions can be labeled. The labeled dimensions, then, represent the attributes that readers use to evaluate the games.

Along the X axis, *Starflight* and *Gunship* were plotted at opposite ends of the axis, while *Wizardry, Ultima III, Ultima IV, The Bard's Tale* and *Might and Magic* clustered together in the center. We interpreted this to represent the reality of the location in which the game occurred—*Gunship* on modern Earth, *Starflight* in a fictional future universe and the remaining games in fantasy worlds that resemble a medieval version of our Earth. We call this axis the Reality Dimension.

The Y axis appears to represent the perspective (point-of-view) of the player. At one end, the *Ultima* games provide the player with a detached "top-down" perspective located above the action, whereas games like *Gunship* and *Wizardry* allow the player to see the action from the perspective of a character in the game. *Starflight* offers a mixture of both perspectives, depending upon

Fig. 1: Ratings of Hall of Fame Games

Mths	Ult 4	Wiz	Strflt	Gnshp	Ult 3	M&M	Bard
1	7.84	7.69	7.63	7.57	7.55	7.53	7.53
2	7.88	7.72	7.62	7.57	7.58	7.55	7.56
3	7.87	7.73	7.60	7.56	7.60	7.53	7.59
4	7.91	7.75	7.58	7.58	7.62	7.54	7.61
5	7.91	7.76	7.66	7.53	7.64	7.65	7.66
6	7.90	7.78	7.69	7.54	7.62	7.65	7.69
7	7.90	7.50	7.68	7.58	7.69	7.67	7.70
8	8.00	7.43	7.67	7.64	7.52	7.66	7.85
9	7.97	7.81	7.46	7.69	7.76	7.67	7.89
10	7.99	7.81	7.68	7.97	7.76	7.35	7.89

Fig. 2: Correlation Matrix of Changes in Ratings

	Ult 4	Wiz	Strflt	Gnshp	Ult 3	M&M	Bard
Ultima 4	1.000						
Wizardry	-.140	1.000					
Starflight	-.060	-.384	1.000				
Gunship	.680	.215	.016	1.000			
Ultima 3	.409	.471	-.301	.611	1.000		
Might/Magic	-.021	-.412	-.142	-.665	-.191	1.000	
Bard's Tale	.944	-.069	-.112	.709	.581	.030	1.000

whether the spaceship is in space or on the ground. We call this the Perspective Dimension.

The Z axis seems to reflect the graphic quality of the game. At one end, *Wizardry* provides few colors and limited control over the action. The *Ultima* games, grouped near the center, use only a few colors, but provide substantial control over the action. At the other end, *Starflight* offers a variety of looks via its fractals and a good deal of control over the action. We call this the Graphics Dimension.

These results suggest that the *CGW* readers who responded to the ratings surveys evaluated the games according to: 1) the location in which the game was set; 2) the perspective from which the game was viewed; and 3) the nature of the graphics with which the game was presented. Since the data used in this study represented only those games rated as superior by the readers, we cannot tell which of the dimensions are preferred nor which end of each dimension is seen as more appealing. However, with your help, we will investigate a wider range of games and be able to develop a better understanding of what *CGW* readers like.

We want to do a similar analysis on data specifically designed to help us investigate many of the questions posed at the beginning of this article. We need you to rate several games at the same time. In addition, we would like you to provide us with some information about yourself to help us analyze the data more effectively. To help us in this survey, provide the information requested by Question #54 in the Reader Input Device for this issue. There will be no cost to you and all responses will be strictly anonymous. The results will be published in an article similar to this one in a future issue of *CGW*.

The New Ratings System

The editors of *CGW* altered the rating system used to evaluate games from a numerical evaluation to a letter grade system. Their rationale was that the numerical system was too artificial and the individual reader would not have a uniform standard against which games might be compared. On the other hand, everyone has had experience with the letter grading system in school and they felt that this familiar system would provide the reader with a more comfortable standard by which games could be rated. The original ratings system was a fine one and was only abandoned because the editors felt that the letter grading system would make a good rating scale even better. Since they were concerned about how well the new system would work, they asked us to compare the ratings generated under the old system with those from the new system.

Under the old numerical system, reader responses demonstrated a pattern known in testing as a Central Tendency. In other words, people who responded under the old system seemed to shy away from the extremes of the numerical rating scale. Ratings became less numerous closer to the ends of the scale. This meant that some very good games did not appear quite as good and some stinkers did not appear quite as bad.

Another artifact of the numerical system was that the majority of the games rated fell within a restricted range between 6.0 and 8.0 and could only be separated by using a very fine scale to two decimal places. Thus, a better-than-average game would not fall very far from just average games and a very minor shift in the original numerical ratings of a game might cause a significant shift in that game's final position on the ratings chart. Finally, the original system rated games in only two categories—strategy and action/adventure. Thus, games that were quite different from one another might

(Continued on page 73)

Origin/CGW Omega Tournament Report

AUSTIN (CGW) -- The monthly competition in the Origin/CGW Omega Tournament is getting red hot. September's tournament had 39 entrants, October's tournament featured 48 competitors, and the November shootout sported an impressive 76 tanks! Can the December tournament top the 100 entrant level? Stay tuned.

The NovemberOrigin/CGW Omega Tournament Champion is HELIVES designed by Steve Huskey of Overland Parks, KS. Steve is an OMEGA level Cybertank engineer using the Amiga. The top six tanks in the November tournament were: 1st - HELIVES (Uses random tactics. You never know what to expect); 2nd - DORSAI2 designed by Gus Smedstad of Kentwood, MI (A new improved version of the 6th place tank, DORSAI. Loves to Fight); 3rd - DORSAIL2 also designed by Gus (Utilizes a Turbo-Laser for quick firing); 4th - DRAGON2 by Dennis Belcher of Princeton Junction, NJ (Stands in the trenches until the final shot. Tough to take out); 5th - STRYKBOK by Steven Schafer of McHenry, MD (Designed for maximum durability. A very stalwart tank); 6th - DORSAI by guess who of you know where (Hyperaggressive. A close combat specialist).

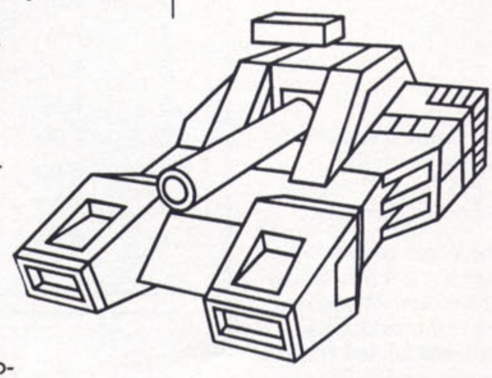
Each of the designers of the above tanks qualify for the Championship Round.

There are now a total of 18 "cybertank engineers" that have qualified for the OSI/CGW Championship Round to be held in February 1990.

Comments From OSI Officials

The November Tournament was oriented around the use of terrain and tank mobility. OSI was pleased to observe that most tanks had well-developed scanning and stalking routines to locate enemy forces. We used some open fields on the tournament map to encourage open ended fighting with multiple opponents. Overall, OSI is proud of their top-notch "cybertank engineers" (pay raised are being discussed) and encourages all employees to work hard to prepare for the January Tournament. OSI management wishes all of its employees to *have a productive (and happy) New Year!*

The January Tournament deadline is January 31, 1990, 9AM.



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Inside the Industry

News, Notes and Quotes From the Computer Entertainment Industry

Nintendo Practices to be Referred to Justice Department

Washington, D.C.—On Thursday, December 7, 1989, Chairman Dennis Eckart (D-OH) of the Antitrust Subcommittee of the House Committee on Small Business announced that his subcommittee had uncovered a number of concerns with regard to **Nintendo of America**'s role in the home video game industry. Issues which will be referred to the Antitrust Division of the U. S. Department of Justice include: use of "lock-out" computer chips in a large majority of games and game players; use of exclusive and restrictive licensing practices; potential problems regarding the retail market for home video games; and the practice of bundling software purchases with hardware sales. Assistant Attorney General James Rill will bear the responsibility for further investigation and necessary action. The Justice Department has the option of declining to investigate further, but it is rare for the department to completely ignore concerns brought to their attention by Congress.

Software Toolworks Acquires Mindscape

Chatsworth, CA—The Software Toolworks, Inc. (NASDAQ:TWRX) has acquired Mindscape via an exchange of stock where slightly over two shares of Mindscape common stock brought one share of Software Toolworks stock (exchange ratio 1:.4375). The merger agreement in which the acquisition takes place has been approved by the Board of Directors of each company and only requires approval of Mindscape shareholders, expected to be obtained by March, 1990. Software Toolworks CEO Les Crane formally reported the advantage of acquiring Illinois-based Mindscape as adding diversity to product mix and revenue flow. In specific, the official statement underscored the Nintendo license and foreign publishing and distribution facilities of Mindscape as of particular interest to the company. Both Crane and Mindscape CEO Roger Buoy (who will remain on board as Creative Director of the combined companies) cited Nintendo products as a primary factor in the product mix of the new company.

CGW Readers Select All-Time Favorites

In *CGW #63*, readers were asked to list, in order, their five all-time favorite computer games. First place votes were worth five points, second place votes scored four, and following. Here are the Top Ten:

Title	Total Points	First Place Votes
Empire	220	17
Dungeon Master	183	23
Ultima IV	147	15
Wasteland	139	13
Pool of Radiance	125	8
F-19 Stealth Fighter	111	12
Bard's Tale	111	5
Ultima V	110	9
Wizardry	102	9
Pirates!	102	5

Conversions Received



- Alien Syndrome (Sega) IBM
- Ancient Land of Ys (Kyodai) Apple IIGS
- Ballistix (Psygnosis) C-64, IBM
- The Cycles Accolade) Amiga
- Deathbringer (Spotlight) C-64
- Decisive Battles Vol. III (SSG) IBM
- Dragons of Flame (SSI) Amiga
- Dragon Wars (Interplay) C-64
- The Duel: Test Drive II: Car Disk (Accolade) Amiga, IIGS
- Dungeon Masters Assistant (SSI) Amiga, IBM
- Fiendish Freddy (Mindscape) ST
- Fire Brigade (Panther) Mac
- F/16 Combat Pilot (EA) Amiga
- Halls of Montezuma (SSG) Mac
- Joan of Arc (Broderbund) Amiga
- Leisure Suit Larry II (Sierra) Amiga
- Manhunter 2 (Sierra) Mac
- Omni-Play Horse Racing (SportTime) Amiga
- Space Rogue (Origin) Mac
- Targhan (Silmarils) Amiga
- Thud Ridge (360) C-64
- Thunder Blade (Sega) IBM
- TV Sports Football (Cinemaware) IBM

(Continued from page 43)

Kriegsmarine

opt to conduct the battle under a geographically unique condition known as Arctic Twilight. If this option is chosen units which are directly to the North fall under sighting restrictions used in night combat while all other vessels are sighted normally. The level of air superiority reflects how frequently during the course of a battle aircraft attacks will occur, as well as how effective air attacks are against those damaged forces trying to make it to port after the fray.

Call To Battle

The essential element of success in either pre-generated or "home grown" scenarios is the proper definition of combat doctrine. This involves: 1) the establishment of the conditions under which vessels will open or close the range to their contacts; 2) determination of the circumstances under which ships may fire on contacts; and 3) establishment of preferred torpedo and gunnery ranges for each of your groups. Speed of approach and engagement, intended ship movements and utilization of smoke screens are also delineated at this point. One of the nicest additions in this area is the inclusion of the "Target Nearest or Largest" option. This allows better fire coordination and control of dispersed elements of the force once the battle is joined.

Actual combat, especially during night or Arctic Twilight, is often confusing and more disorganized than the well thought out battle plan intends. This uncertainty and hesitation to fire on unknown contacts (yes, friendly fire is a real danger) reflects some of the actual tension faced by commanders, then *and* now. Battles are fluid and often find the forces intermixed in a dance known as the torpedo two-step. The sudden and quite unexpected loss of one of your vessels to one of these deadly dancers is dramatic and, sometimes, decisive in affect on the overall engagement.

Returning To Port

The historical scenarios include the "Battle of the River Plate", an indecisive engagement which resulted in the unnecessary scuttling of the *Graf Spee*, the "End of the Bismarck", the "Sinking of the Charybdis", the "Battle of North Cape" and several lesser known actions involving German commerce raiders. Some of the scenarios are balanced, but the majority reflect the inadequate readiness and numerical inferiority faced by the German commanders. One final element which may enter into game play involves the degree of pressure Hitler placed upon the German Naval Command *not* to lose capital ships because of the ensuing loss of prestige that would result. Historically, this led to a much more cautious approach by the Germans than was actually necessary. Selection of this option not only causes German forces to disengage more frequently, it also increases British victory points for damage inflicted upon German capital vessels.

Even games which offer considerable play value can be improved. *Kriegsmarine* is no exception to this rule. Although the expansion of the doctrinal options is commendable, one must wonder why the games in this series take so long to resolve calculations. The IBM version of *Kriegsmarine* runs nearly as slow on a 286 machine at 12 Mhz as *Long Lance* did on the Apple II+. One could also hope for a little bit more input on damage control. Couldn't the flag officer establish some orders regarding what to accomplish on these occasions. Finally, with independent companies like **General Quarters** and **Conflict Analytics** offering on-screen maps and Combat Information Center perspectives, shouldn't **SimCan** join the graphic movement? Nevertheless, *Kriegsmarine* is a fine addition to an already successful series of naval wargames by **Simulations Canada**. The scuttlebutt (translate as rumor for land lubbers) has it that the final game of the series is currently in development. Tentatively entitled *Fleet Med*, the game will cover British, Italian, French and American forces in the Mediterranean from 1940-1943. **CGW**

Architectural Complaint

In reply to your September review of our *Sargon 4* chess program, we readily appreciate the difficulty of analyzing programs of this complexity and the time involved to accurately evaluate them. We feel you are doing your readership a very great service by comparing the two best chess programs available in the micro-computer market. Unfortunately, with no opportunity to review this comparison, some inaccuracies have come in.

My first remark has to do with comparing apples and oranges. Although a product may span many different machines and computer architectures, the operations of such software, the implementation and low level functions, must (by virtue of their very differences) be quite unique. It is quite possible to evaluate the front-end (interface, menu styles, etc...) of any software created across hardware platforms, however the guts of any processor dependent algorithms can not be. Chess algorithms fall into this latter category. To evaluate the Macintosh version of *Sargon 4* against anything but the Macintosh version of another chess program, when speaking to the chess engine, power of the program, or speed, is both inaccurate and misleading to your readership.

Mr. Wagner points out that there is some confusion about opening library size. Mr. Wagner seems confused, and seems to equate these words to mean the same thing. I think the term "68,000 unique positions" is fairly clear, indicating calculation of all the truly different game positions available, (not just counting the moves!). We find our competition's calculation of opening moves a bit puzzling, but on that basis we fall into the 150,000 or greater range also.

Mr. Wagner mentions that *Sargon 4* features a "Novice" and "Easy Play" mode while the competition has 2 modes plus "type of play" features. By design, we have chosen to implement a system of user controls over the "power" of the chess algorithm, (reducing the memory available to it, the time or level it can think to, how it uses the opening book) instead of introducing some pattern of random bad moves (essentially degrading the chess engine). We feel this allows users some control over their opponent while insuring the integrity of the chess engine algorithm.

Your writer indicates that *Sargon 4* only lets the user set the number of "plys" to 20, while our competition lets the user set any number. This is correct, but we don't believe this statement to be meaningful, nor do we consider it a limitation. Should you try this level of plys it will seem almost equal to infinite play. 20 plys is very deep, well beyond the depth usually searched (even in several hours per side).



An Error: In paragraph 12, "*With* Chessmaster 2100, *it will referee between you and another human player.*", implying that *Sargon 4* does not support this function. **It does**. ("Verify Moves", second item in the "Options" menu in the program, also found on page 35 of the IBM manual and page 33 of the Macintosh manual).

Lastly, I must take exception to your writers final comments and conclusions. In the second to last paragraph, he contradicts himself and draws a conclusion which is wrong, baseless, and misleading to your readership. I quote, "*A definitive answer to this*", *(how our program performs against the competition)*, "*would be very difficult to provide without a great deal of time to try and find a fair match of options and conditions*". This statement is **VERY** true. Next, your writer goes on to state that he tried several matches (obviously across computer architectures) and found the results to be a draw. In one sentence he states that to do a fair comparison, one must match the software (and the hardware!) correctly. In the next, he states his conclusion based on inaccurate and obviously mismatched circumstances. To properly compare these two programs you must be using equal machines (speed, available memory, same architecture) and select equal settings, and do a large number of tests (a statistically significant amount). From this type of testing true conclusions can be made. I think You'll find a **VERY** definitive answer!

If you really want to test the usability of these products, try running them head to head on original PC's (at 4.77 Mhz) with EGA, video cards and 640K of RAM. To really point out the facts, use 3D mode on both. In this comparison, they both play many levels of good chess, but you'll find yourself with **LOTS** of free time while waiting with our competition's program.

William H. Ellis
Product Development Manager
Spinnaker Software

With regard to comparing apples to oranges, please note that we did not have the IBM version of Sargon 4 *in hand at the time of the September review (completed in July). Mr. Wagner's reference to the "draw" was preceded with the caveat in order to insure that readers would not believe there was a simple, definitive answer when comparing the programs. We had so many requests from readers to explain the differences between the two games that we felt obligated to compare them, even across the architectures. Even though there are occasional differences between game versions prepared for different machines, CGW's primary goal is to examine game design and playability rather than machine specifics. We try to be "software specific" rather than "machine specific" wherever possible.*

The Too "Blue" Blues

I thought you were supposed to be a multi-system magazine! All I have seen lately are reviews for the IBM!! How about more reviews for Amiga users?

Jim Allman
Wyandotte, MI

We continue to try to cover the software as it is published. Right now, most companies are attempting to get their MS-DOS products out the door, first. That is why there is such a proliferation of IBM-specific reviews. Hang on to your CGWs, though. Amiga and Atari ST conversions have the inside track over other formats. As for our MS-DOS emphasis, remember that we covered "Populous" and "Archipelagos" in CGW #62, while they were Amiga only products; "Journey" was not yet available on the IBM, nor was "Arthur" when we reviewed them in September; "Universe III" was reviewed based on the Amiga version in October's coverage and "The Kristal" was Amiga only; and our Christmas Buying Guide referenced 13 announced Amiga products out of the 36 mentioned. We haven't merged with "Big Blue" yet!

It is interesting that a few years ago when the Apple II format was the #1 entertainment PC (as the IBM is now)

(Continued on page 87)

A Fool's Errand- 1492.

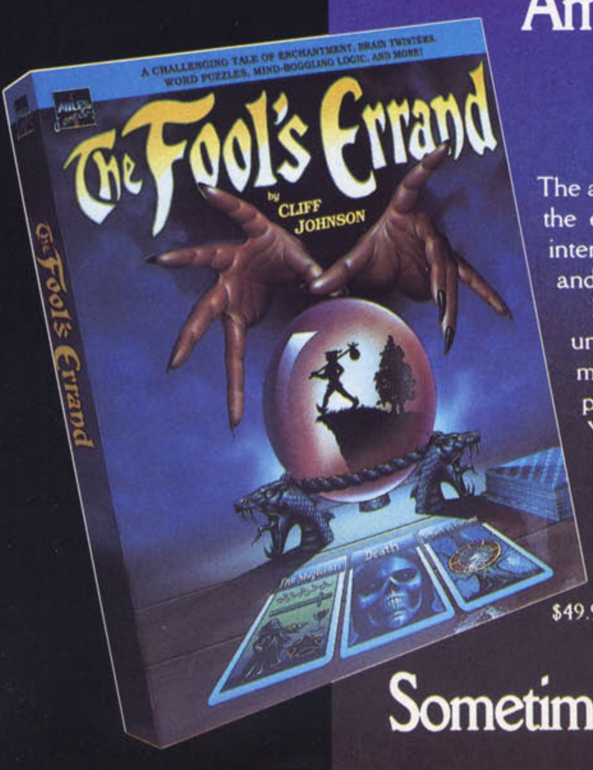
The Fool's Errand- 1989.





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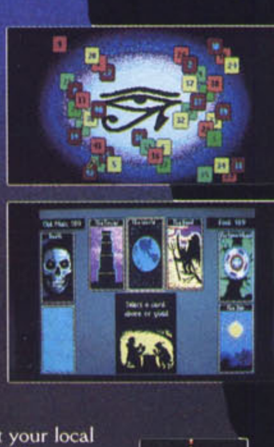
The award-winning *Fool's Errand* is a game like no other. It tells the enchanting story of the fool in his search for wisdom, intertwined with over 80 original puzzles: graphic, word, logic, and more.

Each unique puzzle is woven into the threads of the unraveling story. The puzzles give you pieces of the sun's map. But the map is a puzzle as well. And there are more puzzles that lie hidden in the map.

You figure it out.

And when you do, you will be rewarded with a four-minute animated finale.

You will have earned it.



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Sometimes, it's wise to play the Fool.

MILES Computing

The Magic Candle

Volume I

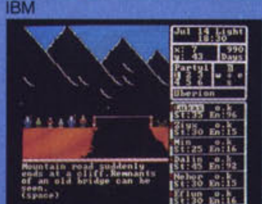
1989
Role-Playing Game of the Year.

— Computer Gaming World


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"Bottom line: Definitely recommended."
— Scorpia, Computer Gaming World

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"The Magic Candle is an addictive game. . .weeks of exciting entertainment."
— Lesser, Dragon Magazine

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— William R. Trotter, Game Players

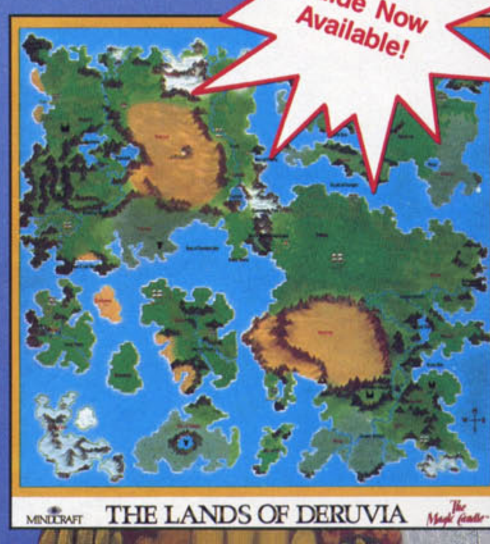
"The Magic Candle is one of the best RPG's to come along."
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The Magic Candle Volume I is currently available for: Apple II (64K required), IBM and Compatibles (in CGA, EGA and Tandy 1000 16-color mode), Commodore 64/128.



MINDCRAFT

Mindcraft Software, Inc.
2341 205th Street, Suite 102, Torrance, CA 90501

(Continued from page 34)

The Dark Heart of Uukrul

these letters represent, and you must be careful about using the letters, since you have only one of each. Thus, if you label a square A, and later on use A again, only the second usage will show on the map.

This is especially handy when you want to return to an important place you've marked but can't quite recall its location. On the auto-map, you can "jump" to any labeled square and see exactly where it is, saving a great deal of time and trouble.

Flaws In The Ointment (Critical Notes)

However, Uukrul does have its flaws. The random chastising of clerics, for instance. If a cleric uses his prayers frivolously, or attempts one for which he is not yet ready, a bolt from the blue is understandable. When it comes in the middle of fierce combat and the prayer is a sincere one, it is less so.

Combat can also be frustrating at times, since the monsters usually get more moves than you do. For instance, you move a fighter next to an Orc. The Orc steps down a square. You move the Paladin in front of it, and the Orc moves back a square. This often led to wasted rounds, where the fighters stood around helplessly with nothing to hit, leaving you dependent on whatever your mage or cleric could do. While some monsters might have multiple moves, there is no reason for most all of them to have that ability.

Good puzzles should have been introduced much earlier in the game. Until you reach Urshas, you have the feeling you're in another typical "hack and slash, nuke 'em 'til they glow" dungeon scenario. This feeling is reinforced by the lack of interaction with anyone outside the marketplace and, even there, you are limited only to merchandising activity.

The soul amulets, which are the game's copy protection, were a pain to translate. Fortunately, they are needed only when you reach a new Sanctuary. Even so, something a little less tedious would have been better, as it is all too easy to make a mistake and have to start over again.

Finally, it is a material error to have both the save position and the backup position on the same disk that is used for playing, especially in a game that is as disk-intensive as this one. One crash, and you are in severe trouble. So it's a good idea to make regular backups of both the A and B disks at regular intervals as a precaution against disaster.

Riddle Me This (Conclusions)

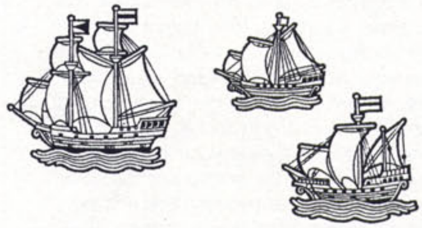
For all that, Uukrul is still a better-than-average specimen of the all-dungeon romp. Except in the latter stages of the game, you spend a lot of time in that activity. Most of the puzzles are clever and of better quality than found in many games of this type (except the gargoyle/Phoenix riddles, which are rather blatant). The manual is easy to read, well-laid-out, and provides all the information you need to get started.

Bottom line: A good choice for the (patient) puzzle-oriented dungeon adventurer.

 CGW

(Continued from page 24)

Over There!



graphics and logical puzzles. Characters are supposed to be able to interact with all objects and surroundings and arcade action will be included in the mix. The interface will place spells, potions and weapons under joystick control (a game to rival *Times of Lore*, perhaps?).

Blade Warrior is set in a land of fantasy where evil reigns. Only the player's character has a chance of quelling the foe with the aid of his trusty broadsword and magical power. His task is to collect a variety of stone fragments from many wizards. Once collected, he must give them to a mad sorceror. Only then, will he be given the legendary sword, the one weapon powerful enough to destroy Murk—the power of hell incarnate. *Blade Warrior*, which promises a complex plot, is unusual in that the graphics utilize an atmospheric, multi-frame, silhouette technique (the programmer comes to game design from the film animation business). It is expected to be released in the U.K. before Christmas (Amiga, Atari ST and IBM).

Remember an earlier mention of **Ocean**'s *F-29 Retaliator* where the player flies an American aircraft of the same name? Well, the game must be based more on fiction than on fact as the only "29" designation denoted to an American aircraft is the X-29, the forward-swept wing test plane based on the Northrop F-5. The only plane depicted thus far in publicity for *F-29 Retaliator* more closely resembles the MIG-29. Do the pictures illustrate the good guys or the "bad guys"?

Games published in the U.K. can be ordered from the following mail order retailers:

Computer Adventure World, Bank Buildings, 1A Charing Cross, Birkenhead, England, L41 6EJ. Tel: 01144 51 666 1132.

Castle Software, 2 William Clowes St., Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent, England. Tel: 01144 782 575 5043.

SDC, 60 Boston Rd., London, England, W7 3TR. Tel: 01144 567 7621. **CGW**

Circle Reader Service #47

Circle Reader Service #48 »

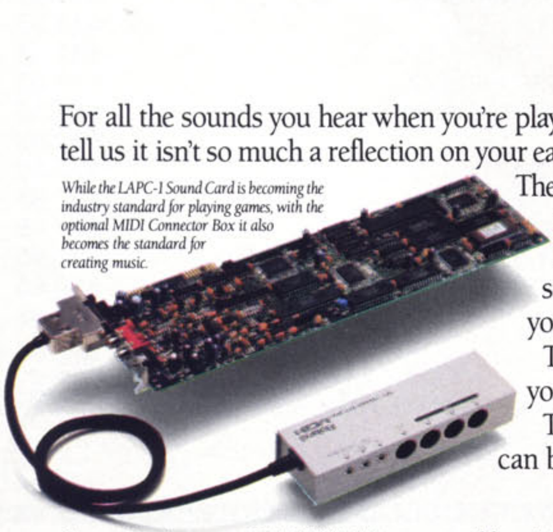
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System Requirements: IBM-PC/XT/AT or compatible, minimum 256k RAM

(Continued from page 61)

The Psychology of Computer Games

end up being compared to each other on the same listing. Therefore, when these ratings were collapsed into a composite scale, their positions relative to one another could be misleading.

Under the new letter grading system, the spread of the ratings is more uniform and a comparison of the monthly composite ratings with the original data shows no evidence of a Central Tendency. The new ratings accurately reflect the actual spread of ratings in the original data and the grades given are distinct in the monthly ratings. By the way, the numbers in the monthly ratings may be easily converted to letter grades (12 = A, 9 = B, etc.).

Another benefit to the new system is the adoption of six categories into which the games are placed rather than the old two category system. These six categories (strategy, simulation, adventure, role-playing, wargames and action/arcade) are realistic divisions based on the nature of the game. This increases the chance that games within any given category will probably be rated by those players who prefer that type of game. Thus, a comparison of the ratings within a category will more than likely tell you what the "experts" in that category like.

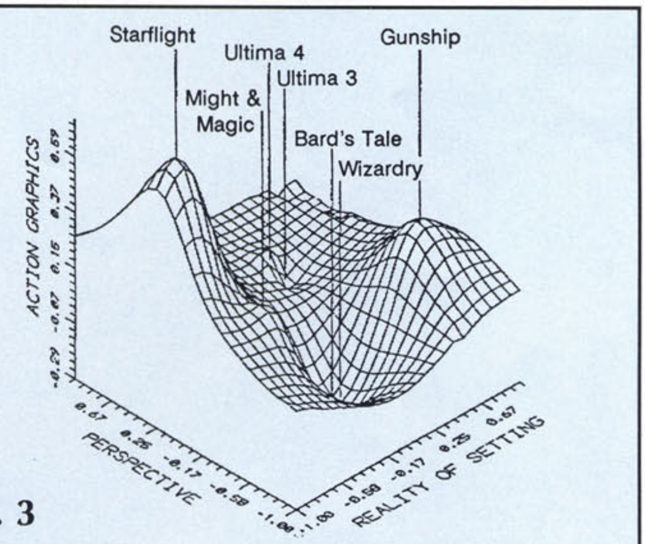
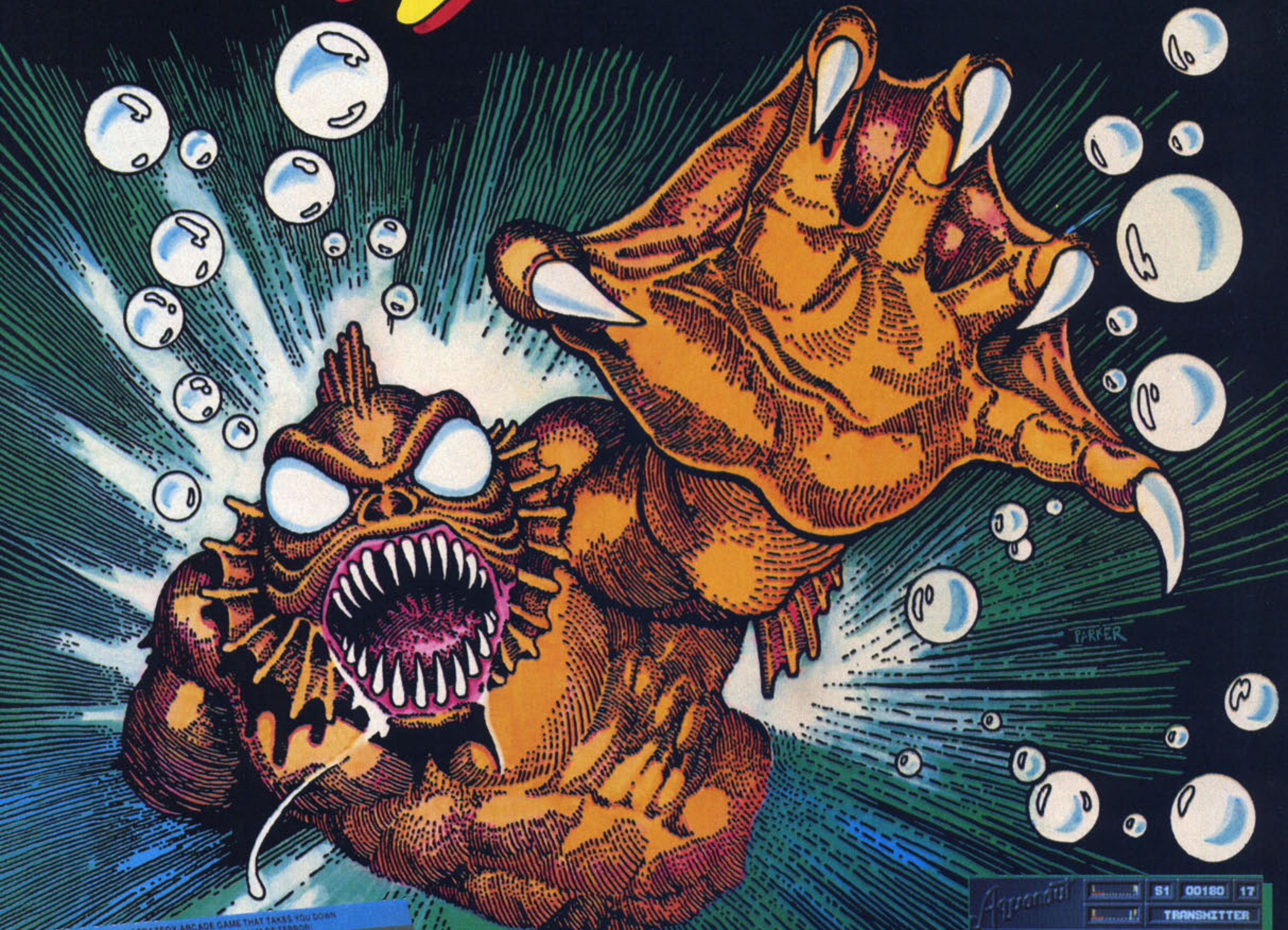
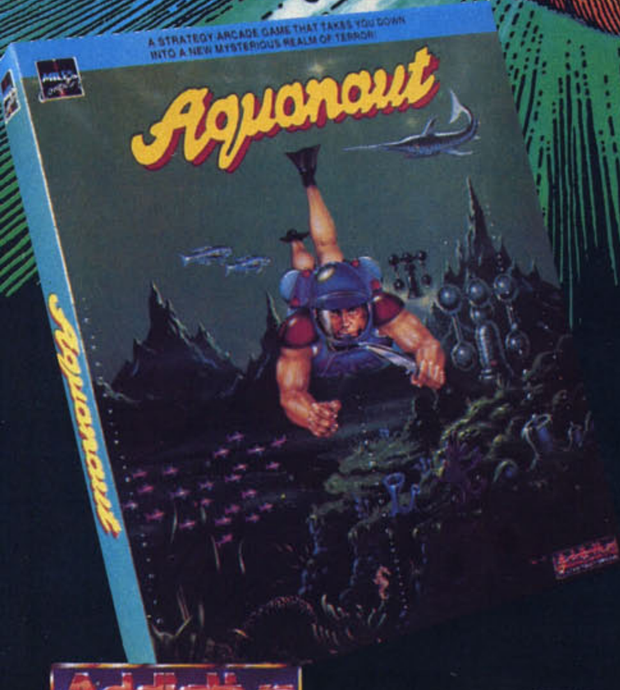


Fig. 3

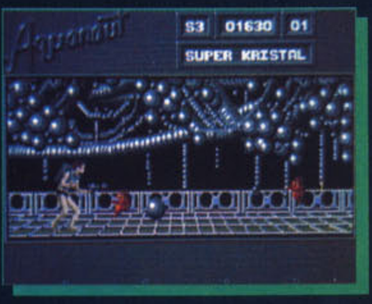
One final comment on the *CGW* ratings system is in order. In their ratings chart, *CGW* always provides information on the average number of responses upon which a game's rating is based. In statistics, ratings based upon larger numbers of responses tend to change less than ratings based upon fewer responses. So, the rating of a game with an average of 100+ responses will be more stable than the rating of a game based on thirty or so responses. In other words, one can tell how many people have played and evaluated the game and infer something about the game's durability. Even though the game may be older, a respectable rating based on a large number of responses may suggest that it is worth one's time to try it out. **CGW**

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MILES Computing

(Continued from page 50)

Blitzkrieg at the Ardennes

tures utilize the computer's ability to relieve the player of some of the more tedious aspects of wargaming. The "where" feature is a nice addition, which brings up a map depicting about half of the total map area, with the active unit's current position outlined in yellow and all the hexes it could legally move to outlined in blue. This feature obviates the necessity to trace movement hex-by-hex, totaling movement points against terrain costs as one goes.

In combat, units engaged against one another are outlined in a distinctive color so the player can tell at a glance which units are involved in which battle. The game also features weather, air attacks (weather permitting), V-2 rocket attacks against Liege or Antwerp, bridge-blowing, bridge-rebuilding, defensive fire from artillery, infiltrators, hidden units, and more. Most importantly, the computer opponent will play either side, depending on your preferences.

In spite of these advantages, the game does have several drawbacks. None of these are fatal toward ultimate enjoyment of the game's challenge, but they warrant mention nonetheless. First, the computer opponent can take up to 15 minutes to resolve a turn. This seems excessive, all the more so as the cybernetic Field Marshall is no brighter than any other "computer general" you've played against of late.

Next, the game could be considerably improved with a historical order of battle. Neither on-screen nor in the documentation are there historical unit designations. This may not be a disaster as far as game play is concerned, but it lessens the value of the game to students of military history.

Finally, the documentation has a few problems, as well. For example, the start-up menu lists a feature entitled "Play-Level 1-5". It is not even mentioned in the documentation, much less explained.

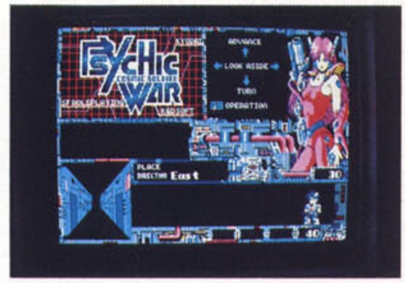
Despite its flaws, however, this is a challenging game. It is easy to learn, stimulating to play and offers a reasonable simulation of some of the choices available to the respective Army commanders. Hidden units provide a high uncertainty level and mandate a level of caution vs. risk that one seldom experiences in a pure boardgame.

CGW

(Continued from page 8)



Battle Squadron



Psychic War



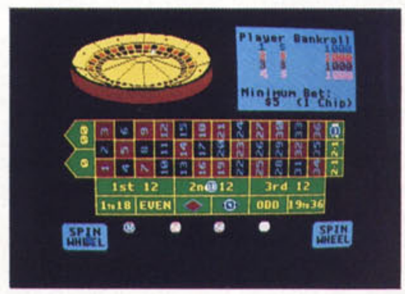
Dragons of Flame



Demon's Tomb



Time to Die



Vegas Casino 2

football package for players who want to do it their way. Players build their team from scratch, distributing ability points to their players, creating a playbook with a sophisticated play making system, and designing an artificial intelligence to coach based on their pigskin philosophies. The game comes with several pre-created teams of varying levels to play against. This looks like one of the better football packages out there. Mac ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #5.

Capcom
3303 Scott Blvd.
Santa Clara, CA 95054

POCKET ROCKETS: Put four 600cc superbikes to the test on either the drag strip, or a standard road racing scenario. Both scenarios offer standard road racing arcade action. IBM (pictured) ($34.95), C-64 ($29.95), & Amiga ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #6.

Innerprise
128 Cockeysville Rd.
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BATTLE SQUADRON: One or two players fight their way across the Barrax Empire's home planet, trying to dodge, bomb, and blast their way past a landscape bristling with more than 50 different ground emplacements, "flash and burn" weapons, and spinning, darting air opponents. Colorful backgrounds and 3-D graphics will keep the joystick jockeys jumpin'. Amiga ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #7.

Kyodai
58 Mitchell Blvd.
San Rafael, CA 94930

PSYCHIC WAR: This Japanese role-playing/action game comes across the ocean complete with six 3-D mazes, 49 different enemy aliens to conquer, eight psychic powers to master, and a variety of maps, decoders, cards, crystals, transmitters and armor to acquire. The players must put together an ideal fire team of psychic warriors, equip them with all the right weapons, and then fight their way past the evil energy-draining Psychic Barriers and the dread Bio-Beast. All in a day's work! IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #8.

Strategic Simulations, Inc.
675 Almanor Ave.
Sunnyvale, CA 94086

DRAGONS OF FLAME: This latest *Dragonlance* action game has eight "Companions of the Lance" on a quest taking them through the wilderness of the Elven Mosaic, through the caves of Sla-Mori and into the fortress of Pax Tharkas. Once there, they must recover the sword "Wyrmslayer" and free the slaves held there by the evil dragons and Draconians. Dragons, giant wasps, griffins, wraiths, zombies and scores of other monsters are betting the players won't make it. IBM (pictured) & ST ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #9.

Virgin Mastertronic
18001 Cowan, Stes. A & B
Irvine, CA 92714

DEMON'S TOMB: This is a standard text/graphic adventure in which players first play an English archaeologist who experiences a violent death on a dig in Devonshire England, and then portray his son in an attempt to unravel the mystery of his father's death. The game can be played with or without graphics and has an 'advanced' parser with many handy editing options. IBM ($14.99). Circle Reader Service #10.

TIME TO DIE: The player takes the part of Sam Harlow, a 1934 Private Eye, and is immediately issued a death threat in this text/graphic adventure. Quickly find out which of the twenty suspects is behind the threat or fall subject to getting shot at, burned, beaten up, strung up, ripped to pieces by dogs, blinded by crowbars, or ... IBM (pictured) & C-64 ($14.99). Circle Reader Service #11.

VEGAS CASINO 2: In this sequel to *Vegas Casino* the players compete in Roulette or Craps. The two games are interlocked so money won in one game is automatically transferred to the second. At $9.99 it's much cheaper than a trip to the "City of Lights". IBM (pictured) & C-64 ($9.99). Circle Reader Service #12.

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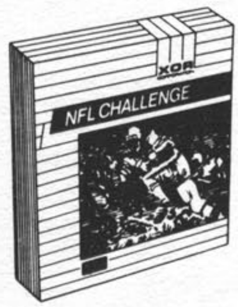
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Circle Reader Service #55

(Continued from page 14)

Lost in the Ozone Again

matter to rest those on your target and press the right mouse button. With tracers enabled, you'll see a spray of shells heading toward your target.

Naturally, the opposing pilots won't be waiting for you to fire. They'll jink, dive, climb, and perform other tactics to get *you* into *their* sights.

An aircraft that's hit will begin to trail smoke. This gives you time to eject and parachute to safety. (One of my early flights ended when a radio conversation suggested: "If you want to see if you have bombs, hit 'Escape P'." I thought, "Gee, I wonder if I have bombs?" and duly hit "Escape P". I'd forgotten that meant Parachute.)

You may want to join a bomber as a gunner, to help knock out enemy radar or airfields. Once at a "/field", ask around. If 7777 decides to be pilot of a B17, you could ask to "/join 7777 tail" to sign on as tailgunner. You'll be notified upon acceptance or rejection. When all positions are manned, 7777 will "/fly" and away you go.

On Saturday nights, there are campaign games where all participants must adhere to certain rules. For example, one side may be restricted to FW190s, while the other side is limited to B17s and Mustangs. Targets may be radar installations or airfields.

Tactics

In my various falls from grace, I've learned a couple of tricks that may help a beginner last longer.

1) Using only 10-20 percent of available fuel makes your ship faster and lighter.

2) Emergency power gives your plane an extra speed boost, although it uses the fuel faster.

3) Never join a fuzzball, er, dogfight.

4) With flaps down you gain altitude in place of speed. Flaps up give you increased speed, but not as much altitude.

5) Don't bother leading the target as you would if you were duckhunting. Simply put your crosshairs on their ship and fire.

6) Avoid aces. You can examine other players' scores. So, if they have a high pilot rating, avoid them!

7) Practice landings without wheels. You'll sometimes lose your undercarriage.

Analysis

If you enjoy airplane games, you'll like *Air Warrior*. You had better be resigned to spending some money on it, though, because *time* flies while *you* do. I just wish it were cheaper. Even so, hope to see you in the wild blue yonder.

(To join GEnie, set your terminal software to half-duplex, have a major credit-card handy, and dial through modem 1-800-638-8369. When it comes on-line, hit HHH. After U# appears, enter GEnie and hit Return. It costs $25.95 to sign up, and non-prime-time connect costs are $5.00 per hour for 300 bit per second [BPS] modem, $6.00 per hour for 1200 BPS, and $10.00/hr. for a 2400 BPS unit.) **CGW**

Circle Reader Service #58 »

HARPOON

Somewhere in the desolate and freezing wastes of the North Atlantic, between Iceland and the Kola Peninsula, a Soviet battle fleet is lurking, ready to pounce on its prey.

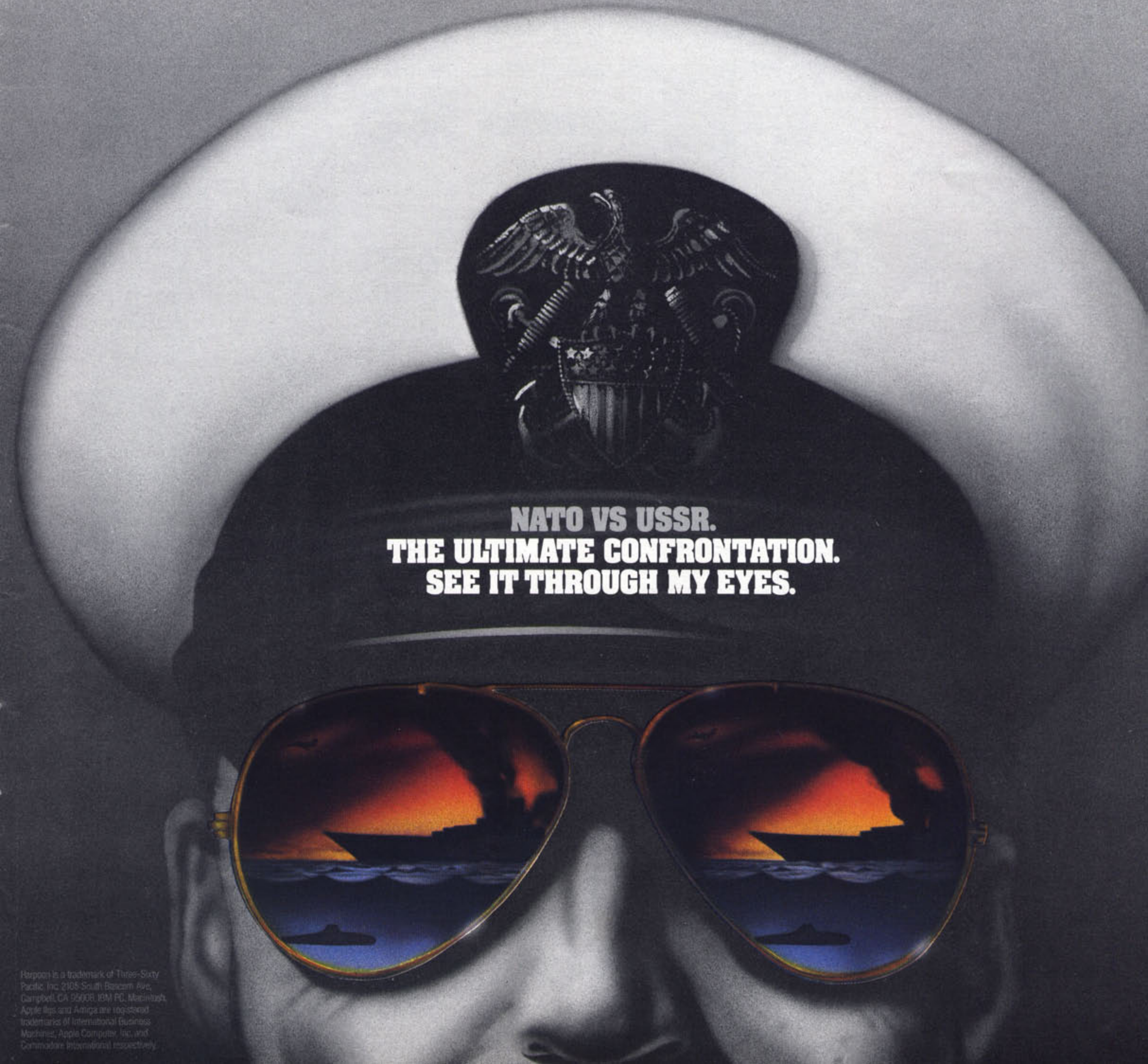
As NATO Task Force Commander you must deploy your fleet of submarines, ships, and aircraft to locate, engage and defeat the Kremlin's finest.

Produced by Larry Bond, noted co-author of "Red Storm Rising" and Naval Analyst, Harpoon portrays the superpower's final confrontation. Now it's up to you.

With graphics that make everything else look like finger painting, and an arsenal of weaponry that comes up to your armpits, Harpoon's non-stop action, relentless intensity and chilling responsibility will leave you gasping. It's more than a mere game—it's a current event!

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THREE-SIXTY



(Continued from page 18)

Sword of the Samurai

samurai. Larger armies provide more opportunities for battlefield glory and the cycle continues.

In between these opportunities, there will be ample time to "Practice Kenjutsu" (improving one's swordsmanship and hence, likelihood of gaining honor through dueling) and participate in "Melee" sequences (to achieve honor). A caveat concerning the "Melee" sequences should be mentioned here. Early copies of the game had a bug on Disk "C" which caused the game to crash in the middle of some of the "Melee" sequences. This was only a minor annoyance if one was in a position where he could restore without losing land or honor, but it was extremely frustrating if the character happened to be returning to his home fief in order to save the game after winning a battle or duel (essentially losing land or honor). **Microprose**'s Customer Service department will replace those Disk "C"s free of charge. Those who cannot wait can download the corrected file from **GEnie**'s Games Round-Table (File #1688, Category 7).

On a Kakuyoku and a Prayer

The "Battle" sequences are elegantly choreographed. Players choose from one of three offensive or defensive formations (in accordance with the dictums of Sun Tzu). On the offensive, the *Hoshi* (Arrowhead) formation is utilized for head-on attacks, while *Kakuyoku* (Crane's Wing) enables one to develop a double flanking attack and *Katana* (Long Sword) helps in attempting to flank one side or another of the enemy's lines. On the defensive, *Ganko* (Birds in Flight) assists one in meeting the *Hoshi*-style attack head on, while *Koyaku* (The Yoke) aids one in enveloping the enemy from the flanks and *Engetsu* (Half-Moon) enables one to place all his strength on one flank or another. Both terrain and one's opponent's initial formation may dictate which will be most successful for the player.

Of course, selecting the initial formation is not all there is to generalship. One must be ready to take advantage of any opportunity. In the "Battle" sequences, players may order any unit under their command to any place on the battlefield by selecting the unit, pointing the cursor (a Japanese war fan) to the position on the battlefield the unit needs to march to and clicking. It is clear, simple and efficient, as well as having exactly the right feel of realism to it. The terrain is sufficiently varied to keep it interesting and the battles keep getting larger and more complex as the player's ability in this area improves.

Just An Old Fashioned Blood Song

The "Melee" sequences are, graphically, the least attractive part of the game. The overhead perspective in these sequences, especially those where the character is exploring the interior of a castle, is reminiscent of a time-honored game style dating back to computer gaming's formative years (e.g. *Castle Wolfenstein, Temple of Apshai, Rescue At Rigel* etc.). Even so, the system works and serves to present a vital part of samurai legend—the hero against hordes of villains. Samurai films invariably offer these sequences as a means of showing how far above the average fighter the skilled warrior's abilities are.

Isolated from the rest of the game, the "Melee" sequences are extremely disappointing. However, in the context of the game, i.e. as a counterpoint to the "Battle" and "Duel" sequences, the "Melee" sequences add pacing, excitement and variety to the game. Characters strike from long range with their bows and from short range with their *katana*s and face opponents with a random assortment of bows, muskets, spears and swords to increase the variety. As the manual notes, the bow is the most efficient weapon in these sequences. Some constraints of realism impinge on the arcade action here. Alas, once the character is



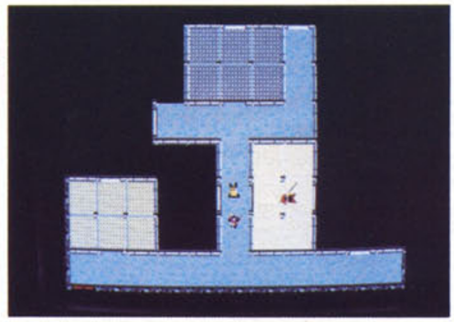
"Duel" Sequence: Arigato Triumphs Over His Instructor.

engaged at sword range, he cannot ever backtrack fast enough to increase range far enough to use the bow (at least, in this reviewer's experience). It would have been more convenient in dealing with some opponents at close range, albeit less realistic.

In reality, those who dislike the "Melee" sequences can "Just say no" to these sequences by choosing the "Avoid trouble and go about your business" option. In essence, the gamer who can work generalship (through the Battle sequences) and swordsmanship (through the Dueling sequences) to his advantage may be able to compensate for the honor lost (by avoiding as many Melee sequences as possible).

Duel in the Rising Sun

Fortunately, the "Duel" sequences more than make up for any disappointment which one may encounter in the "Melee" sequences. Since the player views his character from a behind the back view, the interface is very natural. One moves in a logical pattern, using joystick or keyboard directional keys, and moves the sword in the same way by pressing the button or "Enter" key. It is so in-



"Melee" Sequence: Arigato fights His Way Through a Rival's Castle.

tuitive that even this reviewer, who usually eschews games which depend upon quick reflexes and significant hand/eye coordination, became a competent swordsman. The entire sequence was smoother, easier and more logical than the similar sequence in *Pirates!*.

As a bonus, the sound effects were extremely effective (even with the IBM speaker). One could hear the opponent parry one's thrust (or vice-versa) or aurally note the katana finding its mark. Note: As one advances to *hatamoto* and *daimyo*, the opponents get better, so it is advisable to select the "Practice Kenjutsu" on occasion and improve one's skill with the sword from time to time. One never knows when it will be necessary to face a rival in a matter of honor or square off against an assassin.

Arigato's Ambition

As "Domo Arigato", my player finally attained the title of Lord Matsuya. This is where the game offers some parallel to **Koei**'s *Nobunaga's Ambition*. Both games deal with the province to province conquest which lead to the formation of the Shogunate. However, *SOS* does not rely on hex grids and traditional war-



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game mechanics. Instead, one's generalship now becomes the vital factor in conquering enough provinces to declare oneself "Shogun".

Again, there is a beauty in *SOS*'s game design. One does not *automatically* become "Shogun" when he achieves the number of provinces necessary to declare himself such. Rather, he must be certain that he is sufficiently strong to fight off the combined forces of all the other *daimyos* when he declares. Then, when he does declare, the battle takes place using the familiar "Battle" sequence, but portraying more massive forces than previously in the game. The battle can be hot and heavy, with plenty of confusion and movement, but it is a glorious experience where the ebb and flow of battle is both visual and visceral.

Scroll of Honor

Sword of the Samurai is more than an action/adventure. It not only offers enough divergent streams of opportunity and destiny to insure replayability, but provides enough different gaming styles and venues to beckon many styles of gamers into its web of intrigue, warfare and honor. It may seem to be a mere compendium of mini-games, but (to paraphrase Sartre) the gameplay is not the sum of what is included but the totality of what may be experienced. As noted earlier, *Sword of the Samurai* has a zen of its own.

Designer's Notes

The Secret History of Sword of the Samurai™

by Lawrence Schick

Microprose Software, as you probably know, established its reputation by producing top-quality vehicle simulators (such as *Solo Flight* and *F-15 Strike Eagle*), as well as wargames (like *Crusade in Europe* and *Conflict in Vietnam*). By early 1986, game designers Arnold Hendrick and I were eager to expand into role-playing adventure games. We weren't satisfied with the games that were out there and thought we'd like to take a different approach. However, company president Bill Stealey wasn't keen on the idea—he felt we should stick to what we know.

Clearly, only co-owner Sid Meier was going to be able to change Bill's mind about role-playing adventure games, so we were quite pleased when Sid got interested in creating one of his own. Sid and Arnold came up with *Pirates!* and Major Bill was converted. Initially, *Pirates!* was greeted rather warily by our marketing and sales departments, but once it was selling like hotcakes, all they wanted to know was what we were doing for a follow-up, and when it would be ready.

At a game design presentation in late '87, Arnold and I unveiled our proposals for *M1 Tank Platoon* and *Sword of the Samurai*. Both games got the go-ahead and I was assigned the project leadership of *Sword of the Samurai*. My task was to create an outline of the game's structure, then form a team to develop the game: an artist, a sound composer/programmer, and several game programmer.

My first problem was that I knew next to nothing about feudal Japan, so there was plenty of research ahead of me, particularly since we at Microprose pride ourselves on setting our games in accurate and realistic contexts. Actually, we sometimes overdo it, and worry about whether a game is historically accurate when we ought to be worrying about whether it's fun. I knew I'd have to be careful about overdoing the details on this game, since it deals with a subject most Westerners are unfamiliar with.

We already knew *Sword of the Samurai* would employ the graphic-window-and-text-menu interface that had been so successful in *Pirates!*, but what else should be in it? I wanted to avoid designing a game that would be too esoteric for the average American gamer, so I decided that first I'd take only a quick survey of samurai culture—just hit the high spots, the

stuff people expect in a samurai game—and build the design around those. Once I'd determined the game's basic structure, I'd go back and do some *serious* research.

After reading several general histories of feudal Japan, devouring a stack of novels and comic books, as well as watching every Kurosawa samurai film I could get my hands on, I decided on the features I wanted in *Sword of the Samurai*:

1) *The game must reflect samurai culture.* Feudal Japan was a warrior culture in which honor, loyalty and martial ability were respected above all other virtues. The game should judge the player's success by how he measures up to these standards. To do well, the player should have to *think* like a samurai.

2) *The player should have a wide range of opportunities to improve his character's situation.* At most times in Japan's history, a samurai's fate was determined by his birth. However, during the 16th century, the "Warring States" period, the country dissolved into near anarchy (the perfect setting for a role-playing game). Central authority disappeared and each clan's warlord became almost an absolute ruler. Warriors could and did rise from the lowest ranks of the clans to become lords and commanders of mighty armies. Setting the game in this period also gave our game a goal (i.e. become your clan's warlord, conquer all the other lords and then, unify Japan under your rule—becoming Shogun!).

3) *There must be rival characters who act intelligently.* This period is rife with war and intrigue. Therefore, all the samurai located around you player also dreams of bettering themselves—preferably at your expense. I wanted the player to face ambitious rivals who have the same opportunities as the player and who select their courses of action based on intelligent self-interest. Players should actually be able to learn about the game by watching their rivals' moves.

4) *There must be battles.* Warlords fight wars, so we needed some way of resolving them. I decided to give the player a taste of generalship by including a simple wargame sequence in which the player-general controls units of spearmen, archers, cavalry and musket-troops. This would be a wide-open, fluid system, not based on boardgame hexgrids.

5) *There must be sword fights.* Last, but by no means least, there must be a way to resolve points of honor between warriors. The duel between two highly skilled swordsmen is a central feature of most samurai epics. In addition, there are the melees in which the lightning-fast hero cuts down dozens of lesser samurai. Yes sir, duels and melees—I wanted them both.

By the time I'd finished, I'd outlined a monster of a game, with everything in it but the kitchen sink—but somehow it didn't look too big back in '87. I started to put together the development team.

Picking the first two members was easy, as they both insisted on being in on this project. Michael Haire, our head artist, had some great ideas for the graphic look of the game. He thought we should abandon our usual representational approach and emulate the heavily stylized Japanese art of the 16th and 17th centuries. When I saw what he had in mind, I quickly agreed. Sid Meier was intrigued with the idea of non-player characters who act on their own initiative. He came on board to create the framework of the "self-interest generator" that enables the player's samurai rivals to make intelligent choices. Later, he came back to lend a hand with the Duel screen.

The rest of the development didn't go so easily. It was nearly a year of fits and starts before we settled down with a committed team of game programmers to realize the rest of the game: John Kennedy on the Melee screen; resident tools guru Dave McKibbin creating the Battle screen; and ace game engineer Jim Synoski handling the role-playing code and holding it all together. Veteran sound programmer Ken Lagace created the sound effects, with atmospheric Japanese-style music composed by Jeff Briggs (one of our game designers who happens to have a doctorate in music composition). The result is an action-packed role-playing game that's rich, subtle, easy-to-get-into, but difficult to win. We're all very proud of it.

CGW

(Continued from page 66)

we were called Computer Apple World by one disgruntled Atari 8 bit reader.

Feelin' "Grog"gy

I just wanted to send you a letter to let you know how much I enjoyed your December 89 issue. I especially enjoyed the two game reviews by Ltc. M. Evan Brooks. There is just one thing I would like to ask him—what is a "grognard"? This term shows up in both his reviews (and your "Inside The Industry"). I've been in the military for 13 years (Air Force and Air National Guard) and been a computer gamer since 1980, but I'm not familiar with the term. Who knows—I may be one and not even know it!

Raymond P. Stickler
Paris, IL

"Grognard" is a French word used to reference members of Napoleon's "Old Guard". It comes from the French verb, "to grumble" or "to complain". Hence, even though you won't find the word in an English dictionary, we use it to refer to experienced wargame fanatics who are willing to slog through plenty of details, even if they complain a bit. As both a military veteran and a "Stickler" for detail, you probably would be a grognard.

Don't Go Ahead

Usually I don't respond to product reviews because I strongly believe it is a reviewer's prerogative to report his/her personal opinions about a product. However, having just read Scorpia's review of **Accolade**'s new role-playing game, *Don't Go Alone*, I feel it is very important to respond. In an attempt to respond to *Computer Gaming World*'s editorial needs and lead time, we provided a pre-release version of the product that was approaching final code, but was certainly not complete. This version was not meant to be regarded or reviewed as final software, but, due to an unfortunate error, it was reviewed as such in last month's issue.

I strongly believe that the review of *Don't Go Alone* would have been more positive had Scorpia had an opportunity to review the final version that was released to market. This version, in fact, contains many of the features Scorpia noted were lacking.

As with any product of this magnitude, many features were tweaked, changed and even added during the last weeks of development. All ten levels of the house were redesigned. Existing puzzles were reworked and more were added. The ability to trade items among the search party was included, and the product now supports **Ad-Lib** and **CMS** sound boards.

We also made a conscious decision to adjust the play balance so that the first two levels of the house were easier, making the game more accessible and less frustrating to a larger audience. As the player moves through the game, however, the challenges increase in terms of puzzles that need to be solved and strategy tactics required to defeat the creatures the party will encounter.

Scorpia noted that in her version there were "no puzzles, no mysteries to solve and no difficult obstacles to overcome." On the contrary, the version that your readers will find in their software stores contains a multitude of puzzles and obstacles that players must encounter and solve before progressing to each new level. On the early levels, for instance, players will need to collect clues and information required for use in the later levels, such as: formulas, hints and items. There is also beneficial information hidden throughout the ten levels that can help or heal you—if you can find it. The layout of the house is progressively more complex and players will not be allowed to proceed until they successfully solve each level's puzzles.

Further, I'd like to respond to some of the statements in the review that are no longer accurate as they regard the final version:

1) While you cannot create characters from scratch, the stats of the 16 from whom you can choose are randomly generated and vary each time you create a new party.

2. The "trial and error" method using the Table of Elements is certainly one way to complete formulas, but a more exciting method is to "discover" them hidden in the house as you proceed through it.

3) Monsters *do* make physical attacks and all of a character's stats are affected. Viewing a character's stat screen will reveal both a numeric and graphic display of his/her current stats.

4) If you run from combat, there is a one in four chance that an item will be stolen from you. This does not occur 100% of the time as indicated in the review.

5) All characters have the ability to trade items and to carry more than one of any item. This is, in fact, necessary since many items can only be used by particular classes.

6) Every encounter has animated monsters.

7) Contrary to the remark that nothing can be used or manipulated, every weapon must be activated as well as armor. Formulas have to be used (there are even some that don't exist in any of the books, but can only be found by making your way through the house) and there are certain items you will find along the way that you will be required to use.

These comments are not intended to criticize Scorpia or her remarks. Indeed, had we stopped development of *Don't Go Alone* with the version she reviewed, her comments would be accurate. Since the final version is markedly more advanced, I hope Scorpia will take a look at it and draw new conclusions about *Don't Go Alone*.

Sheldon Safir
Manager, Product Development
Accolade

An unfortunate error has occurred in this case. It is CGW's policy to write a "Sneak Preview" about a game when we have not yet seen the final copy, but to hold the review until we have the final version of the game. With Don't Go Alone, *Accolade provided Scorpia with a pre-publication version so that we could get an early start (Scorpia is an out-of-house writer based in New York). Later, they updated the copy with an advanced beta version. Scorpia knew it was still a beta version and Accolade understood it as such, but (since the editorial staff did not see either the disks or the cover letter that identified it as such) we assumed that the final code (which would play just like the games sold in the stores) had been sent to her. In an effort to avoid this problem in the future, we will restrict our advanced looks to those products which can be previewed in our California offices. We're thankful for Mr. Safir's clarifications about the product.*

Visceral Evaluation

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Richard Lim
Houston, TX

And we intend to spill them, too!

On the R.I.D. card provided opposite page 12, please rate the following games (if you have played them) and articles (if you have read them) by using a letter grade scale (I.e. A to F). Just rate the games as if you were an educator. As with the world of education, the scale will translate to:

A= Excellent

B= Above Average

C= Average

D= Below Average

F= Failure

If you wish, you may assign pluses (+) or minuses (-) to your letter grade (i.e. B+, B-, C+, C-, etc.). As always, rate only those games that you have played.

Over the next three issues we will rerate all of the games on our current R.I.D. list and a number of other titles as well. Remember that thousands of gamers will be making buying decisions based on the results of these ratings, so help your fellow gamer out and let him know what is a worthy purchase and what is not.

Demographics

(List the appropriate number)

1. What is your age ?

1 = Under 14 years old
2 = 14-17 years old
3 = 18-20 years old
4 = 21-30 years old
5 = 31-35 years old
6 = 36-40 years old
7 = 41-50 years old
8 = 51+ years old

2. What machine(s) do you play games on?

(List all numbers that apply. List the machine you use most often first, the others in descending order of use).

1 = IBM, clones, Tandy
2 = Amiga
3 = Apple 8 bit
4 = Apple IIgs
5 = Atari ST
6 = Atari 8 bit
7 = C-64/128
8 = Macintosh
9 = Other (specify)

3. How much time do you typically spend playing computer games each week?

1 = Less than 2 hours
2 = 2-5 hours
3 = 6-10 hours
4 = 11-20 hours
5 = 21-30 hours
6 = 31+ hours

RID #63 Questions
Games

4. Targhan (Star Games)
5. F-19 Stealth Fighter (Microprose)
6. Sim City (Maxis)
7. Populous (EA)
8. Red Storm Rising (Microprose)
9. Battlehawks 1942 (Lucasfilm)
10. Wasteland (Electronic Arts)
11. Ultima V (Origin)
12. Lords of Rising Sun (Cinemaware)
13. Pool of Radiance (SSI)
14. Might and Magic II (New World)
15. Hero's Quest (Sierra)
16. Starflight 2 (EA)
17. Knights of Legend (Origin)
18. M-1 Tank Platoon (Microprose)
19. TANK (Spectrum Holobyte)
20. Curse of the Azure Bonds (SSI)
21. Star Saga Two (Masterplay)
22. It Came From The Desert (Cinemaware)
23. Their Finest Hour (Lucasfilm)
24. Mean Streets (Access)
25. Sword of the Samurai (Microprose)
26. Hardball II (Accolade)
27. Star Trek V: The Final Frontier (Mindscape)
28. Harpoon (Three-Sixty)
29. Kriegsmarine (SimCan)
30. UFO (SubLogic)
31. Bandit Kings (Koei)
32. MechWarrior (Activision)
33. Double Dribble (Konami)
34. F-15 Strike Eagle II (Microprose)
35. Ghostbusters II (Activision)
36. Deathtrack (Activision)
37. Joan of Arc: Siege & The Sword (Broderbund)
38. Space Rogue (Origin)
39. Prince of Persia (Broderbund)
40. War of the Lance (SSI)

Articles

41. Hero's Quest Review
42. Turbo-Grafx Survey
43. Knights of Legend Review
44. Their Finest Hour Review
45. Kriegsmarine Review
46. Psychology of Games
47. Over There
48. Sword of Samurai Design Notes
49. Sword of Samurai Sneak Preview
50. Hoyle's Book of Games Review

Questions

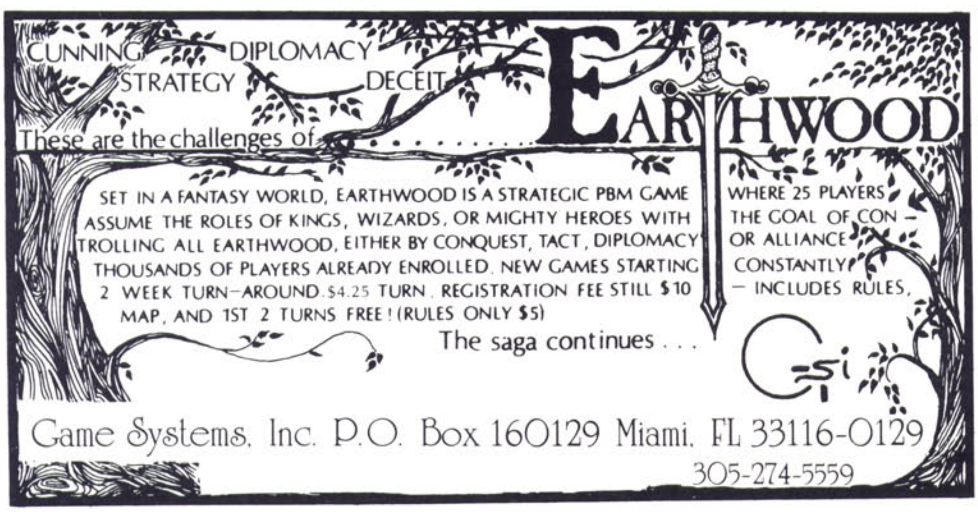
51. If you have an MS-DOS compatible, please answer "Yes" if your machine can read high density disks and "No" if it cannot.

52. Please list the following game controllers in order of preference:
a. trackball controller,
b. mouse,
c. keyboard,
d. touch tablet, or
e. joystick.

53. If you have an MS-DOS compatible, please answer "Yes" if your machine has a hard disk drive and "No" if it does not.

54. Would you be willing to participate in the survey described in the "Psychology of Games" article? If so, please print your name and address in the open space provided on this card. If you are under 18, please send a note from your parents or guardian to CGW, granting permission for you to participate in the survey.

Circle Reader Service #63



Circle Reader Service #64

Circle Reader Service #65 »

- BLASTEROIDS: C-64/128, Amiga, Atari ST. Coming Soon: IBM
- VINDICATORS: Amiga, Atari ST Coming Soon: C-64/128, IBM, Apple II GS
- XYBOTS: C-64/128, Amiga, Atari ST. Coming Soon: IBM
- ROLLING THUNDER: C-64/128
- APB: IBM, C-64/128, Amiga, Atari ST







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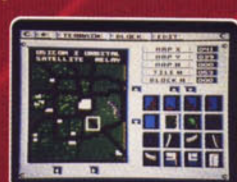
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